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The Catholic Series.

ON

THE NATURE OF THE SCHOLAR,

AND ITS

MANIFESTATIONS.

BY

JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE.

Translated from the German,

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY WILLIAM SMITH.

"The whole material world, with all its adaptations and ends, and, in particular, the life of man in this world, are by no means, in themselves and in deed and truth, that which they seem to be to the uncultivated and natural sense of man; but there is something higher, which lies concealed behind all natural appearance. This concealed foundation of all appearance may, in its greatest universality, be aptly named the DIVINE IDEA."—*Page* 124.

LONDON:
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The exclusively practical tendencies of English intellect to which the influence of the inductive philosophy upon our national character has given rise,—rich as these tendencies have been in lasting benefits to ourselves and to the world,—have yet placed the mark of imperfection on our education, our literature, and our manners. Utility, and that chiefly of an outward sort, has been the ruling idea amongst us, until it has wellnigh reduced our Morality to a calculation of profit—our Literature to a repertory of physical science—and too often even our Universities, where higher principles should have found a safe asylum, to mere workshops of the 'Bread-Scholar.' Defective principles, when pushed to their last results, bring about their own cure; and those who of late years have observed the changes of our mental horizon with any degree of closeness, have seen, without surprise, sufficiently obvious indications of a return to a higher Philosophy and a more profound Morality.

In the present age, the Press has become almost the exclusive vehicle of new spiritual impulse. The characters in which the spiritual leaders of mankind clothed themselves

15941

in former times have mostly passed away from amongst us;—at best, some imperfect realization of the Hero, Prophet, or Priest may from time to time appear—and of those to whom the onward guidance of the human race is now committed, their mantle has chiefly fallen on the Man of Letters. To him, therefore, we must look, with deep interest and anxiety, for the springs of that reformation which is to lead us back from sense and worldliness to completeness and nature. It is his voice which must be raised, amid the clang of our Industry and the bustle of our Commerce, to reäwaken in men their reverence for the Divine,—to teach them that there is in the human soul a nobler impulse than self-interest, and that virtue is higher and holier than love of happiness. To do this, is the vocation of the Literary Man in all ages;—it is especially his duty to an age in which Materialism pervades all existing modes of thinking and acting among men.

At such a time, when the vocation of the Literary Man thus peculiarly demands of him high resolve and faithful endeavour, it is thought advisable to send forth, in our own language, the words of a great man of another land, who taught the duty of the Scholar in his relation to the progressive culture of the human race, as we have *not* been accustomed to hear it taught. If the principles from which that duty is here deduced should at first appear to us startling and incredible, and the character itself so unlike that which we have hitherto assigned to the Man of Letters as to seem extravagant and unattainable,—we will do well to pause over the two pictures, and to ponder with ourselves which is the nobler and more truthful.

Life is the test of principle—the realization which makes the theory of one man a possibility for all men. Fichte's life is the best commentary on his teaching;—a sketch of its leading features is therefore prefixed to this volume. The materials for this Memoir have been collected chiefly from the Life and Correspondence published in 1830 by his son.

EDINBURGH, *Sept.* 1845.

CONTENTS.

Memoir of Fichte, ... *page* 1

Lectures on the Nature of the Scholar—

I. General Plan, ... *page* 123

II. Further Definition of the Meaning of the Divine Idea, ... 133

III. Of the Progressive Scholar in general, and in particular of Genius and Industry, . . . 144

IV. Of Integrity in Study, ... 154

V. How the Integrity of the Student shows itself, 163

VI. Of Academical Freedom, ... 173

VII. Of the Finished Scholar in general, . . . 184

VIII. Of the Scholar as Ruler, ... 193

IX. Of the Scholar as Teacher, ... 201

X. Of the Scholar as Author, ... 212

MEMOIR

OF

JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE.

At the time of the great religious division, when Germany was torn by internal factions and ravaged by foreign armies,—when for thirty years the torch of devastation never ceased to blaze, nor the groan of misery to ascend on high—a skirmish took place near the village of Rammenau, in Upper Lusatia, between some Swedish troops and a party of the Catholic army. A subaltern officer who had followed the fortunes of Gustavus was left on the field severely wounded. The kind and simple-hearted villagers were eager to render him every aid which his situation required, and beneath the roof of one of them, a zealous Lutheran, he was tended until returning health enabled him either to rejoin his companions in arms or return to his native land. But the stranger had found an attraction stronger than that of war or home—he continued an inmate in the house of his protector, and became his son-in-law. The old man's other sons having fallen in the war, the soldier inherited his simple possessions, and founded a family whose generations flowed on in peaceful obscurity until its name was made illustrious by the subject of the following memoir.

The grandfather of the philosopher inherited from his predecessor, along with the little patrimonial possession, a small trade in ribbons, the product of his own loom, which he disposed of to the inhabitants of the village and its vicinity. Desirous that his eldest son, Christian Fichte, should extend this business beyond the limited sphere in which he practised it himself, he sent him as apprentice to Johann Schurich, a manufacturer of linen and ribbons in the neighbouring town of Pulsnitz, in order that he might there learn his trade more perfectly than he could do at home. The son conducted himself well during his apprenticeship, rose high in the esteem of his master, and was at last received into the house as an inmate. He there succeeded in gaining the affections of Schurich's daughter. This attachment was for a long time kept secret, in deference to the pride of the maiden's father; but his prejudices having been overcome, young Fichte brought home his bride to his native village, and with her dowry he built a house there, in which some of his descendants still follow the paternal occupation.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte was their first child, and was born on the 19th May 1762. At his baptism, an aged relative of the family, who had come from a distance to be present at the ceremony, and who was revered by all men for his wisdom and piety, foretold the future eminence of the child; and as death soon after set his seal upon the lips which had uttered the prophecy, it became invested with all the sacredness of a deathbed prediction. Their faith in this announcement induced the parents to allow their first-born an unusual degree of liberty, and by thus affording room for the development of his nature, the prediction became in some measure the means of securing its own fulfilment.

The boy soon displayed some characteristics of the future man. He seldom joined the other children in their games, but loved to wander forth in the fields, alone with his own thoughts. There he would stand for hours, his eyes fixed on the far distance, until he was roused from his trance and brought home by the shepherds, who knew and loved the solitary and meditative child. His first teacher was his own father, who, after the business of the day was over, instructed him in reading, and told him the story of his own journeyings in Saxony and Franconia. He was an eager scholar, soon mastered his Bible and Catechism, and even read the morning and evening prayers in the family circle. When he was seven years of age, his father, as a reward for his industry, brought him from the neighbouring town, the story of Siegfried. He was soon so entirely rapt in this book, that he neglected his other lessons to indulge his fancy for it. This brought upon him a severe reproof; and finding that this beloved book stood between him and his duty, he with characteristic determination resolved to destroy it. He carried it to the brook which ran by his father's house, with the intention of throwing it into the water, but long he hesitated before accomplishing his first act of self-denial. At length he cast it into the stream. No sooner, however, did he see it carried away from him, than regret for his loss triumphed over his resolution, and he wept bitterly. His father discovered him, and learned the loss of the book, but without learning the reason of it. Angry at the supposed slight cast upon his present, he punished the boy with unwonted severity. As in his childhood, so also in his after life, did ignorance of his true motives often cause Fichte to be misunderstood and misrepresented. When this matter had been forgotten, his father bought him a similar book, but the boy would not accept of it, lest he should again be led into temptation.

Young Fichte soon attracted the notice of the clergyman of the village, who, perceiving his talents, resolved to promote their development, and if possible to obtain for him a scientific education. An opportunity of doing so soon presented itself. A guest of the Freiherr von Miltitz, a neighbouring proprietor, was desirous of hearing a sermon from the pastor of Rammenau who had acquired some reputation as a preacher, but had arrived too late in the evening to gratify his wishes. Lamenting his disappointment, he was told that there was a boy in the village whose extraordinary memory enabled him to repeat faithfully any address which he had once heard. Little Gottlieb was sent for, and astonished the Freiherr and his guests by his minute recollection of the morning's discourse, and the earnestness with which he repeated it before them. The Freiherr determined to make further inquiries respecting this extraordinary child; and the friendly pastor having found the opportunity he wished, persuaded him to undertake the charge of the boy's education. The consent of the parents having been with difficulty obtained—for they were reluctant to expose their son to the temptations of a noble house—young Fichte was consigned to the care of his new protector, who engaged to treat him as his own child.

His first removal was to Siebeneichen, a seat on the Elbe belonging to the Freiherr. The gloomy solemnity of this place and its surrounding forests pressed heavily upon the inexperienced boy: he was seized with a deep melancholy, which threatened to injure his health. His kind foster-father prudently resolved to place him under the care of a clergyman in the neighbouring village of Niederau, who, himself without family, had a great love for children. Here Fichte spent the happiest years of his boyhood. He received the kindest attentions from his teacher, whose name he never mentioned in after years without the deepest and most grateful emotion. Here the foundation of his education was laid in a knowledge of the ancient languages; and so rapid was his progress, that his instructor soon found his own learning insufficient for the further superintendence of his pupil's sudies. In his twelfth year he was sent by the Freiherr von Miltitz, first to the town school of Meissen, and soon afterwards to the public school of Pforta, near Raumburg.

The school at Pforta retained many traces of its monkish origin: the teachers and pupils lived in cells, and the boys were allowed to leave the interior only once a-week, and that under inspection, to visit a particular play-ground in the neighbourhood. The stiffest formality pervaded the economy of this establishment, and every indication of free-will was carefully suppressed. The living spirit of knowledge was unrecognised in its antiquated routine, and the generous desire of excellence was excluded by the petty artifices of jealousy. Instead of the free communication, kind advice, and personal example of a home, secrecy, distrust, and deceit were the prevalent characteristics of the school.

When he was scarcely thirteen years of age, Fichte entered this seminary; and from this time forth he was alone in the world, trusting to his own strength and guidance. So soon was he called upon to exercise that powerful and clear-sighted independence for which he was afterwards so much distinguished.

The strange world which he now entered, the gloom and confinement which he encountered, made a deep impression on his mind. His sadness and tears exposed him to the mockery of his school-fellows;—he wanted prudence to disregard them, and courage to complain to a teacher. He determined to run away. Shame and the fear of being sent back to Pforta would prevent him from returning to his protector the Freiherr; he therefore conceived the idea of seeking some distant island, where, like Robinson, he might lead a life of perfect freedom. But he would not steal away—he would make it evident that necessity drove him to the course he took. He warned his senior who oppressed him severely, that he would no longer suffer such treatment, and that if it were not amended he should leave the school. His threat was of course received with laughter and contempt, and the boy now thought he might quit the place with honour. The opportunity was soon found, and he took the way to Raumburg. On the road he remembered the maxim of his old friend the pastor, that every undertaking should be begun with a prayer for divine aid. He sunk to his knees on a rising ground. During prayer he called to mind his parents, their care for him, the grief which his sudden disappearance would cause them. "Never to see them again!"—this thought was too much for him: his joy and his courage were already gone. He determined to return and confess his fault. On his way back he met those who had been sent after him. When taken before the Rector, he admitted that it had been his intention to run away, but at the same time recounted so ingenuously the motives which had induced him to take this step, that the Rector not only forgave his fault, but resolved to take him under his special protection. He obtained another senior, who soon gained his affections, and was afterwards his companion and friend at the University.

From this time Fichte's residence at Pforta became gradually more agreeable to him. He entered zealously upon his studies, and found in them occupation, interest, and spiritual nourishment. The defects of his previous education were supplied by industry, and he soon found himself comfortable and happy. Among those older scholars with whom Fichte now associated, a spirit of independence sprang up—they laboured assiduously to set themselves free from the influence of their teachers, particularly of those who held the most antiquated and worn-out notions. The praise or blame of these masters was little valued among them, if they could secure the esteem of each other. Books imbued with the new spirit of free inquiry were secretly obtained, and in spite of the strictest prohibitions, great part of the night was spent in their perusal. The works of Wieland, Lessing, and Goethe were positively forbidden, yet they found their way within the walls, and were eagerly studied. Lessing's controversy with Göze made a deep impression upon Fichte: each successive number of the *Anti-Göze* he almost committed to memory. A demand for unfettered inquiry was awakened within him: he understood for the first time the meaning of scientific knowledge, and with this knowledge he acquired a presentiment of a new spiritual life. Lessing became to him an object of such reverence, that he determined to devote his first days of freedom to seek a personal interview with his mental liberator. But this plan was frustrated by want of money; and when afterwards it might have been carried into execution, an untimely death had deprived Germany of her boldest thinker.

In 1780, Fichte, then eighteen years of age, entered the University of Jena. He joined the theological faculty, not so much, probably, by his own choice, as by desire of his parents and protector. By his interest in other branches of science, and by the marked direction of his mind to clearness and certainty in his knowledge, it soon became evident that he would not accept the shortest and easiest way to the completion of his studies. Nothing definite is known of the early progress of his mind, but his later productions leave no doubt of its general tendency. He must soon have been struck with the disparity between the form of theology as it was then taught, and the wants of a philosophic intellect. Fichte could only be satisfied with a consistent theory, carried out from one fundamental principle through all its ramifications. We may conjecture what doubts and obscurities dogmatic theology must have presented to his mind at this time, when we recollect that, even at an after period of his life, he still interested himself in the task of reconciling faith with knowledge—revelation with science. He attended a course of Dogmatics by C. F. Pezold, at Leipzic, to which place he had removed from Jena; and in the attempt to attain a clear comprehension of the theological doctrines of the attributes of God, the creation, the freedom of the will, &c., he encountered unexpected difficulties, which led him into a wider circle of inquiry, and finally drove him to abandon the theological for the philosophical point of view. Thus his philosophical speculations had their origin in an attempt to create a tenable system of dogmatics, and to obtain light on the higher questions of theology.

Some hints of the early direction of his philosophical studies may be gathered from his letters written about this time. The question which chiefly engaged his attention seems to have been that of Liberty and Necessity. Rejecting the doctrine of free-will considered as *absolute indifferent self-determination,* he adopted the view, which, to distinguish it from *fatalism,* may be named *determinism.* Every complete and consistent philosophy contains a deterministic side, for the thought of an all-directing Unity is the beginning and end of profound investigation. *Fatalism* sees in this highest unity a dark and mysterious Nemesis—an unconscious mechanical necessity: *determinism,* the highest disposing reason, the infinite Spirit and God, to whom the determination of each living being is not only to be referred, but in whom alone it becomes clear and intelligible.

Fichte seems to have adopted this view apart from any foreign influence;—for he was as yet unacquainted with Spinoza, its most consistent expounder, whom he had only heard mentioned as an abstruse atheist. He communicated his opinions to a Saxon preacher, who had the reputation of distinguished philosophical attainments, and was well versed in the Wolffian metaphysics. He was informed that he had adopted Spinozism, and it was through Wolff's refutation that he first became acquainted with that profound and systematic thinker. The study of Spinoza's Ethics made a powerful impression upon him, and confirmed him in the opinions he had adopted. But in after years, prolonged investigation left him dissatisfied with these views;—the indestructible feeling of internal independence and freedom, rendered doubly powerful by the energy of his own character, could neither be removed, nor explained on an *exclusively* deterministic theory, which must ultimately have come into collision with his strongest mental bias—to look upon freedom—self-determination—as the only true and real being. This is the ground-principle of the Wissenschaftslehre, which in this respect stands opposed to the doctrine of Spinoza, although a general harmony does notwithstanding reign throughout the details of these two great modern systems of spiritualism. Thus has every great theory its foundation in the individual character, and is indeed only the scientific expression of the spiritual life of its originator.

Amid these lofty speculations, poverty, the scholar's bride, knocked at his door, and roused him to that struggle with the world, in which so many purchase ease with degradation, but in which men such as he find strength and confidence and triumph. His generous benefactor was now dead, and he was thrown on his own resources. From 1784 to 1788 he earned a precarious livelihood by acting as tutor in various houses in Saxony. His studies were desultory and interrupted ; he had not even the means of procuring books ; the strength which should have been devoted to his own mental cultivation, was wasted in obtaining a scanty subsistence. But amid all his privations his courage never deserted him, nor the inflexible determination, which was not so much an act of his will as a law of his nature,—to pursue truth for her own sake and at all hazards. "It is our business," says he on another occasion, "it is our business to be true to ourselves: the consequence is altogether in the hands of providence." His favourite plan of life at this period, and for a long time afterwards, was to become a village pastor in Saxony, and amid the leisure which he should find in that occupation, to prosecute, without disturbance, his own mental culture. But his theological studies were not completed, and he was without the means of continuing them. In 1787 he addressed a letter to the President of the Consistory, requesting to be allowed a share of the support which many poor students enjoy at the Saxon Universities, until the following Easter, when he should be ready to present himself before the Consistory for examination. "I have never," he says, "partaken in the public provision for students, nor have I enjoyed an allowance of any kind, although my poverty can be clearly proved. Is it not possible then, to allow me a maintenance sufficient for this short time, that I may be enabled to devote myself to theology until Easter? . . . . . Without this, my residence at Leipzic is of no avail to me, for I am compelled to give all my time to heterogeneous pursuits, in order that I may even live. . . . . . Should it please you to grant my request, I assure you by all that I hold sacred, that I will devote myself entirely to this object, that I will consecrate my life to the Fatherland which supported me at school, and which since then has only become dearer to me, and that I will come before the High Consistory, prepared for my examination, and submit my future destiny to its wisdom." No notice was taken of his request—partly, it may be conjectured, on account of doubts which were entertained of his orthodoxy—a reason which closed the gates of preferment against his friend Weisshuhn and many others.

In May 1788, every prospect had closed around him, and every honourable means of advancement seemed to be exhausted. The present was utterly barren, and there was no hope in the future. It is needful that natures like his should be nurtured in adversity, that they may discover their own strength; prosperity might lull into an inglorious slumber the energies for whose appearance the world is waiting. He would not disclose his helpless situation to any of his well-wishers, but the proud consciousness of his own worth enabled him, amid unmerited sufferings, to oppose the bold front of human dignity against the pressure of opposing circumstances.

It was the eve of his birthday. With unavailing anxiety he had again pondered all his projects, and found all alike hopeless. The world had cast him out,—his country refused him food,—he thought his last birthday was at hand; but he was determined that his honour—all that he could now call his own, should remain unsullied. Full of bitter thoughts, he returned to his solitary lodging. He found a letter awaiting him; it was from his friend, the tax-collector Weisse, requesting him to come immediately to his house. He there placed in Fichte's hands an offer of a tutorship in a private family in Zurich. The sudden revulsion of feeling in the young man could not be concealed, and led to an explanation of his circumstances. The offer was at once accepted, and, aided by this kind friend in the necessary arrangements, he set out for Switzerland in August 1788. His scanty means compelled him to travel on foot, but his heart was light, and the fresh hopes of youth shone brightly on his path. Disappointment, privation, and bondage, had been his close companions, but these were now left behind him, and he was to find an asylum in Liberty's own mountain-home—the land which Tell had consecrated to all future ages as the sacred abode of truth and freedom.

He arrived at Zurich on the 1st of September, and immediately entered upon his office. His duties occupied him the greater part of the day, but he also engaged in some minor literary pursuits. His philosophical studies were in the meantime laid aside. At the request of a friend who had sketched out the plan of a scriptural epos, he wrote an essay on this form of poetry, with special reference to Klopstock's Messias. He also translated some of the odes of Horace, and the whole of Sallust, with an introduction on the style and character of this author. He preached occasionally in Zurich, at Flaach, and at several other places in the neighbourhood, with distinguished success. He likewise drew out a plan for the establishment of a School of Oratory in Zurich, which however was never realized.

In the circle of his friends at Zurich were Lavater, Steinbruchel, Hottinger, and particularly the Canons Tobler and Pfenniger. In his letters he speaks also of Achelis, a candidate of theology from Bremen, and Escher, a young poet, as his intimate friends:—the latter died soon after Fichte's departure from Switzerland.

But of all the friendships which he formed here, the most important in its influence upon his future life was that of Rahn, whose house was in a manner the centre of the society of Zurich. Rahn was brother-in-law to Klopstock, with whom he had formed a strong friendship during Klopstock's visit to Switzerland in 1750, and with whose eldest sister Johanna he was afterwards united. From this marriage with Klopstock's sister, sprang, besides other children, their eldest daughter Johanna Maria, who became Fichte's wife. Her mother dying while she was yet young, she devoted herself entirely to her father, and to his comfort sacrificed worldly show and many proffered alliances. The foundation of her character was deep religious feeling, and an unusual strength and faithfulness of affection. As her family occupied a much higher station in point of worldly importance than any to which Fichte could reasonably aspire, her engagement with him was the result of disinterested attachment alone. Fichte's love was worthy of the noble-minded woman who had called it forth. It was a devotion of his whole nature—enthusiastic like his love for his country, dignified like his love of knowledge, but softened by the deepest tenderness of an earnest and passionate soul. But on this subject he must speak for himself. The following are extracts from letters addressed to Johanna Rahn, while he resided at Zurich, or during short occasional absences. It is necessary to premise that the termination of his engagement, at Easter 1790, led to the departure from Zurich which is alluded to in some of these passages. Fichte, tired of the occupation of a tutor, was desirous of obtaining a situation of a higher nature, and Rahn, through his connections in Denmark, endeavoured to promote his views.

"I hasten to answer your questions—'Whether my friendship for you has not arisen from the want of other female society?' I think I can answer this question decidedly. I have been acquainted with many women, and held many different relations with them. I believe I have experienced, if not all the different *degrees*, yet all the different *kinds*, of feeling towards your sex, but I have never felt towards any as I feel towards you. No one else has called forth this perfect confidence, without the remotest suspicion of any dissimulation on your part, or the least desire to conceal anything from you on mine,—this wish to be wholly known to you even as I am,—this attachment, in which difference of sex has not the remotest *perceptible* influence (for farther can no mortal know his own heart),—this true esteem for your spiritual nature, and acquiescence in whatever you resolve upon. Judge, then, whether it is for want of other female society that you have made an impression upon me which no one else has done, and taught me a new mode of feeling. 'Whether I will forget you when distant?' Does man forget a new mode of being and its cause?" . . .

"The warm sympathy which appears in all these inquiries, the delightful kindness you have shown me on all occasions, the rapture which I feel when I know that I am not indifferent to such a person,—these, dearest, deserve that I should say nothing to you which is profaned by flattery, and that he whom you consider worthy of your friendship should not debase himself by a false modesty. Your own fair, open soul deserves that I should never seem to doubt its pure expression, and hence I promise, on my side too, perfect openness."

* * * * * *

"'Whether there can be love without esteem?' Oh yes,—thou dear, pure one! Love is of many kinds. Rousseau proves that by his reasoning, and still better by his example. 'La pauvre Maman' and 'Madame N——' love in very different fashions. But I believe there are many kinds of love which do not appear in Rousseau's life. You are very right in saying that no *true* and *enduring* love can exist without cordial esteem; that every other draws regret after it, and is unworthy of any noble human soul.

"One word about pietism. Pietists place religion mostly in externals; in acts of worship performed mechanically, without aim, as bond-service to God; in orthodoxy of opinion, &c. &c.; and they have this among other characteristic marks, that they give themselves more solicitude about others' piety than their own. It is not right to hate these men,—we should hate no one,—but to me they are very contemptible, for their character implies the most deplorable emptiness of the head, and the most sorrowful perversion of the heart. Such my dear friend can never be; she cannot become such, even were it possible—which it is not—that her character were perverted; she can *never* become such, her nature has too much reality in it. Your trust in Providence, your anticipations of a future life, are wise and Christian. I hope, if I may venture to speak of myself, that no one will take me to be a pietist or stiff formalist, but I know no feelings more thoroughly interwoven with my soul than these are."

* * * * * *

"I am once more within these walls, which are only dear to me because they enclose you; and when again left to myself, to my solitude, to my own thoughts, my soul flies directly to your presence. How is this? It is but three days since I have seen you, and I must often be absent from you for a longer period than that. Distance is but distance, and I am equally separated from you in Flaach or in Zurich—But how comes it that this absence has seemed to me longer than usual, that my heart longs more earnestly to be with you, that I imagine I have not seen you for a week? Have I philosophized falsely of late about distance? Oh that our feelings must still contradict the firmest conclusions of our reason!" . . . . "You know doubtless that my peace has been broken by intelligence of the death of a man whom I prized and loved, whose esteem was one of the sweetest enjoyments which Zurich has afforded me, and whose friendship I would still seek to deserve; and you would weep with me if you knew how dear this man was to me.

* * * * * *

"Your offer of Friday has touched me deeply; it has convinced me yet more strongly, if that were possible, of your worth. Not because you are willing, for my sake, to deprive yourself of something which may be to you a trifle, as you say it is—a thousand others could do that—but that, although you must have remarked something of my way of thinking ('pride' the world calls it), you should yet have made that offer so naturally and openly, as if your whole heart had told you that I *could* not misunderstand you; that although I had never accepted aught from any man on earth, yet that I would accept it from you; that we were too closely united to have different opinions about such things as these. Dearest, you have given me a proof of your confidence, your kindness, your—(dare I write it?)—love, than which there could be no greater. Were I not now wholly yours I should be a monster, without head or heart—without any title to happiness.

"But in order to show myself to you in a just light, you have here my true thoughts and feelings upon this matter, as I read them myself in my own breast.

"At first—I confess it with deep shame—at first it roused my pride. Fool that I was, I thought for a moment—not longer, that you had misunderstood what I wrote to you lately. Yet even in this moment I was more grieved than hurt: the blow came from your hand. Instantly, however, my better nature awoke; I felt the whole worth of your heart, and I was deeply moved. Had not your father come at this moment, I could not have mastered my emotions: only shame for having for a moment undervalued you and myself kept them within bounds.

"Yet I cannot accept it:—not that your gift would disgrace me, or *could* disgrace me. A gift out of mere compassion for my poverty I could abhor, and even hate the giver:—this is perhaps the most neglected part of my character. But the gift of friendship, of a friendship which, like yours, rests upon cordial esteem, cannot proceed from compassion, and is an honour instead of a dishonour. But, *in truth*, I need it not. I have indeed no money by me at present, but I have no unusual disbursements to make, and I shall have enough to meet my very small regular expenses till my departure. I seldom come into difficulties when I have no money,—I believe Providence watches over me. I have examples of this which I might term singular, did I not recognize in them the hand of Providence, which condescends even to our meanest wants.

"Upon the whole, gold appears to me a very insignificant commodity. I believe that a man with any intellect may always provide for his wants; and for more than this, gold is useless;—hence I have always despised it. Unhappily it is here bound up with a part of the respect which our fellow-men entertain for us, and this has never been a matter of indifference to me. Perhaps I may by and by free myself from this weakness also: it does not contribute to our peace.

"On account of this contempt of money, I have for four years never accepted a farthing from my parents, because I have seven sisters, who are all young and in part uneducated, and because I have a father who, were I to allow it, would in his kindness bestow upon me that which is the right of his other children. I have not accepted even presents from them upon any pretence; and since then, I have maintained myself very well, and stand more *à mon aise* than before towards my parents, and particularly towards my too kind father.

"However, I promise you—(how happy do I feel, dear, noble friend, to be permitted to speak thus with you)—I promise you, that if I should fall into any pecuniary embarrassments (as there is no likelihood that I shall, with my present mode of thinking and my attendant fortune), you shall be the first person to whom I shall apply—to whom I shall have applied since the time I declined assistance from my parents. It is worthy of your kind heart to receive this promise, and it is not unworthy of me to give it."

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"Could anything indemnify me for the loss of some hours of your society, I should be indemnified. I have received the most touching proofs of the attachment of the good old widow, whom I have only seen for the third time, and of her gratitude for a few courtesies which were to me nothing—absolutely nothing, had they not cost me two days' absence from you. She wept when I took my leave, though I had allowed her to expect that she should see me again before my departure. I desire to lay aside all vanities;—with some, the desire for literary fame, &c., I have in a certain degree succeeded; but the desire to be beloved—beloved by simple true hearts—is no vanity, and I will not lay it aside. . . . . . .

"What a wholly new, joyful, bright existence I have had since I became sure of being yours! how happy I am that so noble a soul bestows its sympathy upon me, and such sympathy!—this I can never express. Would that I could, that I might be able to thank you! . . . .

"My departure, dearest, draws near, and you have discovered the secret of making the day which formerly seemed to me a day of deliverance, the bitterest in my life. I shall not tell you whether the day is settled or not. If you do not absolutely command it, you shall not know of it. Leave-taking is bitter, very bitter, and even its announcement has always something painful in it. But one of us—and I shall be that one—must bear the consciousness that thenceforth (but only for a time, if God does not require the life of one of us) we see each other no more. Unless you absolutely require it, you shall not know when I am with you for the last time."

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"I know the business of the scholar; I have no new discoveries to make about it. I have very little fitness for being a scholar *à métier;* I must not only *think,* I must *act:* least of all can I think about trifles; and hence it is not exactly my business to become a Swiss professor—that is, a schoolman. . . . . . . Now I think that the way which you propose cannot have the effect you expect from it. My essays cannot create what is called a 'sensation;' this is not in them nor in me. Many would not even understand their contents; those who did understand them, would, I believe, consider me as a useful man, but *comme il y en a beaucoup.* It is quite another thing when one takes an interest in the author, and knows him.

"If you should be able to excite such an interest among your relatives, then indeed something more might be expected. But the matter does not seem pressing. Before all things there must be a professorship vacant at Bern, and indeed such a one as I could undertake. Then it would be difficult, during my stay here, to make a copy of my essays. And perhaps I shall write something better afterwards, or perhaps I shall hit upon some arrangement in Leipzic respecting these essays, which can easily be made known in Bern. At all events, you shall know, and every good man who takes any interest in me shall always know, where I am. At the same time I entreat of you,—although I know your good will towards me does not need the request,—both now and after my departure to omit no opportunity which presents itself of doing me any service, and to inform me of it. I believe in a Providence, and I watch its signs."

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"So you desire this bitter leave-taking? Be it so, but under one condition: I must bid you farewell *alone.* In the presence of any other, even of your excellent father, I should suffer from the reserve of which I complain so much. I depart, since it must be told, to-morrow eight-days. This day week I see you for the last time, for I set out very early on Sunday. Try to arrange that I may see you alone: how it is to be arranged I know not, but I would far rather take no leave of you at all, than take a cold formal one.

"I thank you heartily for your noble letter of yesterday, particularly because your narrative confirms me so strongly in a much-cherished principle. God cares for us—He will forsake no honourable man."

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"And so be convinced that nothing can turn my thoughts from you. The reasons you have long known. You know my heart; you know yourself; you know that I know you: can you then doubt that I have found the only female soul which I can value, honour, and love?—that I have nothing more to seek from the sex,—that I can find nothing more that *is mine?*"

Towards the close of March 1790, Fichte left Zurich on his return to his native land, with some letters of recommendation to the Courts of Wirtemberg and Weimar. He was once more thrown upon the world;—his outward prospects as uncertain as when he entered Switzerland two years before. Poverty again compelled him to travel for the most part on foot, but, as before, the toil of his journey was lightened by a high sense of honour, an inflexible courage, an unwavering faith; and to these was now added a sweeter guide—a star of milder radiance, which threw a soft but steady light upon the wanderer's way, and pointed him to a happy though distant place of rest. His love was no fleeting passion, no maudlin sensibility, but united itself with his philosophy and his religion in one ever-flowing fountain of spiritual power. The world might turn coldly away from him, for it knew him not; but he did not stoop to its meanness, because he did not seek its rewards. He had one object before him—the development of his own nature; and there was one who knew him, whose thoughts were with him from afar, whose sympathies were all his own. His labours might be arduous, but they could not now be in vain, for although the destiny of his being did not as yet lie before him in perfect theoretical clearness, yet his integrity of purpose and purity of feeling unconsciously preserved him from error, while the energy of his will bore him upward and onward over the petty obstructions of life.

He arrived at Stuttgard in the beginning of April, but not finding his recommendations to the Wirtemberg Court of much advantage, he left it after a short stay. On his way to Saxony he visited Weimar. He did not see Herder, who was ill, nor Goethe, who was absent on his Italian tour, nor Schiller, who was at this time commencing his labours as Professor of History at Jena. He returned to Leipzic about the middle of May, his small stock of money exhausted by the expenses of his journey; and was kindly received by his friend Weisse, through whose recommendation he had obtained the appointment at Zurich. Discovering no prospect of obtaining any preceptorship of a superior kind, he engaged in literary occupations in order to procure a livelihood. He conceived the plan of a monthly literary journal, the principal objects of which should be to expose the dangerous tendencies of the prevalent literature of the day, to show the mutual influence of correct taste and pure morality, and to direct its readers to the best authors, both of past and present times. But such an undertaking was too much opposed to the interests of the booksellers to find favour in their eyes. " I have," he says, " spoken to well-disposed people on this matter, to Weisse and Palmer; they all admit that it is a good and useful idea, and indeed a want of the age, but they all tell me that I shall find no publisher. I have therefore, out of sorrow, communicated my plan to no bookseller, and I must now write—not pernicious writings—*that* I will never do, but something that is neither good nor bad, in order to earn a little money. I am now engaged on a tragedy, a business which of all possible occupations least belongs to me, and of which I shall certainly make nothing; and upon novels, small romantic stories—a kind of reading which is good for nothing but to kill time; this however, it seems, is what the booksellers will take and pay for."

So far as his outward existence was concerned, this residence at Leipzic was a period of great uncertainty and trouble. He could obtain no settled occupation, but was driven from one expedient to another to procure the means of subsistence. At one time he gives "a lesson in Greek to a young man between 11 and 12 o'clock," and spends the rest of the day in study and starvation. His tragedy and novel writing would not last long, nor be very tolerable while it did last. In August he writes—"Bernstorff must have received my letter and essay; I gave it into Herr Bohn's own hands, and he promised to take care of it; yet I have no answer. A lady at Weimar had a plan to obtain for me a good situation; it must have failed, for I have not heard from her for two months. Of other prospects which I thought almost certain, I shall be silent. As for authorship, I have been able to do little or nothing, for I am so distracted and tossed about by constant schemes and undertakings, that I have had few quiet days. . . . . . . In short, Providence either has something else in store for me, and hence will give me nothing to do here, as indeed has been the case; or intends by these troubles to exercise and invigorate me still further. I have lost almost everything, except my courage." Again we hear of a distant prospect of going to Vienna to prosecute his literary schemes, and thus of being nearer Zurich—nay, when on his way, of even visiting it. And then again—"This week seems to be a critical time with me;—all my prospects, even the last, have vanished." But his strength did not fail him; alone and unfriended, he shrank not from the bitter trial. Adversity might roll her billows over his head, but her rage was spent in vain against a soul which she could bend to no unworthy deed.

And yet he was not alone. A fair and gentle spirit was ever by his side, whispering to him of peace, and happiness, and love. "In the twilight," he says, "before I light my lamp, I dream myself back to thee, sit by thy side, chat with thee, and ask whether I am still dear to thee;—ask indeed, but not from doubt—I know before-hand that thou wilt answer, yes. I am always with thee on Saturdays. I cannot give up those Saturday meetings. I think I am still in Zurich, take my hat and stick and will come to thee; and then I remember, and fret at fortune, and laugh at myself." Amid the desolation of his outward prospects, the current of his affections seems to have flowed only more strongly and fully. In them he found a refuge from unworthy thoughts, a strong support in the conflict with misery and want. As the Alpine plant strikes its roots most firmly in barren and rocky places, so did his love cling more closely round his soul, when every other joy had died and withered there.

> "The wretched are the faithful: 'tis their fate
> To have all feeling, save the one, decay,
> And every passion into one dilate."

"Thou dear angel-soul," he writes, "do thou help me, do thou keep me from falling! And so thou dost. What sorrow can grieve, what distress can discourage me, so long as I possess the firm assurance that I have the sympathy of the best and noblest of women, that she looks upon her destiny as inseparably bound up in mine; that our hearts are one? Providence has given me thy heart, and I want nothing more. Mine is thine for ever."

Of a project for engaging him in the ministry, he thus writes—"I know my opinions. I am neither of the Lutheran nor Reformed Church, but of the Christian; and were I compelled to choose, I should (since no purely *Christian* community now exists), attach myself to that community in which there is most freedom of thought and charity of life; and that is not the Lutheran, I think. . . . . . . I have given up these hopes in my fatherland entirely.

There is indeed a degree of enlightenment and rational religious knowledge existing among the younger clergy of the present day, which is not to be found to the same extent in any other country of Europe. But this is crushed by a worse than Spanish inquisition, under which they must cringe and dissemble, partly because they are deficient in ability, partly because in consequence of the number of clergy in our land their services can be spared, while *they* cannot sacrifice their employment. Hence arises a slavish, crouching, hypocritical spirit. A revolution is indeed impending: but when? and how? In short, I will be no preacher in Saxony."

The only record of his religious opinions at this time which is preserved, is a remarkable fragment entitled "Aphorisms on Religion and Deism." The object of this essay was to set at rest the much-vexed questions between Philosophy and Christianity, by strictly defining the respective provinces of each; by distinguishing between the objective reality which reason demands of philosophy, and the incarnate form of truth which religion offers to the feelings and sympathies of men. In the adaptation of Christianity to the wants of the sinner, in its appeal to the heart rather than to the understanding, he finds the explanation of its nature and purposes: "Those who are whole need not the physician, but those who are sick." "I am come not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." This fragment, by its distinct recognition of the radical difference between feeling and knowledge, and the consequent vanity of any attempt to decide between the different aspects which the great questions of human destiny assume before the cognitive and sensitive faculties, may be looked upon as the stepping-stone to that important revolution in Fichte's mental world, to which the attention of the reader must now be directed.

The Critical or Kantean Philosophy was at this time the great topic of discussion in the higher circles of Germany. Virulently assailed by the defenders of the existing systems, with Herder at their head, it was as eagerly supported by a crowd of followers who looked upon Kant with an almost fanatical veneration. Fichte's attention was turned to it quite accidentally. Some increased success in teaching during the winter of 1790, rendered his outward circumstances more comfortable than before, and left his mind more at liberty to engage in serious study. He plunged with enthusiasm into the new philosophy.

The system of religious necessarianism before alluded to, which frequently shows itself in his letters, was by no means in harmony with the natural bent of his character. His energy of will and restless spirit of enterprise assorted ill with a theory in which he was compelled to regard himself as a passive instrument in the hands of a higher power. This inconsistency must have often suggested itself to him before he met with its remedy; he must have frequently felt, that the theory which satisfied his understanding stood in opposition to his feelings. He could not be contented with any superficial or partial reconcilement of this opposition. But he was now introduced to a system in which his difficulties disappeared; in which, by a rigid examination of the cognitive faculty, the boundaries of human knowledge were accurately defined, and within those boundaries its legitimacy successfully vindicated against scepticism on the one hand and blind credulity on the other; in which the facts of man's moral nature furnished an indestructible foundation for a system of ethics where duty was neither resolved into self-interest nor degraded into the slavery of superstition, but recognized by free-will as the absolute law of its being, in the strength of which it was to front the necessity of nature, break down every obstruction that barred its way, and rise at last, unaided, to the sublime consciousness of an independent, and therefore eternal, existence. Such a theory was well calculated to rouse Fichte's enthusiasm, and engage all his powers. The light which he had been unconsciously seeking now burst upon his sight,—every doubt vanished before it, and the purpose of his being lay clear and distinct before him. The world, and man's life in it, acquired a new significance, every faculty a clearer vision, every power a fresher energy. But he must speak for himself:—

To Achelis at Bremen.

"The last four or five months which I have passed in Leipzic have been the happiest period of my life; and what is most satisfactory about it is that I have to thank no man for the smallest ingredient in its pleasures. You know that before leaving Zurich I became somewhat sickly: either it was partly imagination, or the cookery did not agree with me. Since my departure from Zurich I have been health itself, and I know how to prize this blessing. The circumstances of my stay in Zurich, and still more of my travels, had strained my fancy to an unnatural height. When I came to Leipzic my brain swarmed with great plans. All were wrecked; and of so many soap-bubbles there now remains not even the light froth which composed them. This disturbed my peace of mind a little, and it was half in despair that I joined a party to which I should long ere now have belonged. Since I could not alter my outward circumstances, I resolved upon internal change. I threw myself into philosophy, and, as you know, into the Kantean. Here I found the remedy for my evils, and joy enough to boot. The influence of this philosophy, and particularly the moral part of it (which however is unintelligible without previous study of the Critique of Pure Reason), upon the whole spiritual life, and particularly the revolution which it has caused in my own mode of thought, is indescribable. To you, especially, I owe the acknowledgment, that I now heartily believe in the freedom of man, and am well convinced that it is only on this supposition that duty, virtue, or morality of any kind, is so much as possible;—a truth which indeed I saw before, and perhaps acquired from you. Further, it is very evident to me that many pernicious consequences to society flow from the commonly-received principle of the necessity of all human actions; that it is the source of a great part of the immorality of the so-called higher classes; and that if any one, accepting this principle, yet preserves himself pure from such corruption, it is not on account of the innocence, or even the utility of the principle itself. Your uncorrupted moral feelings guided you more truly than did my arguments, and you must admit that, in the latter respect, error is pardonable. A multitude of others, who do not err, have to thank, not their greater acuteness, but their inconsequential reasoning. I am also firmly convinced that this is no land of enjoyment here below, but a land of labour and toil, and that every joy should be nothing more than a refreshment and an incentive to greater exertion; that the ordering of our fortune is not demanded of us, but only the cultivation of ourselves. Hence I do not trouble myself about outward things,—endeavour not to *seem*, but to *be;* and it is to these convictions that I am indebted for the deep tranquillity of soul which I enjoy. My external circumstances suit well with these dispositions. I am master of no one, and no one's servant. I have no further prospects: the present constitution of the church, and indeed the men who compose it, do not please me. So long as I can maintain my present independence, I shall do so at all hazards.

"You ask whether I contribute to the journals? No, to none of them. It was my intention, at first, to write for the "Bibliothek der Schönen Wissenschaften." But all is anarchy there. Weisse *is called* the editor, but the bookseller *is* the editor; and I will have nothing to do with a bookseller in matters of this kind. I sent my essay upon Klopstock's Messias to B. for the "Deutsche Museum." He replied, that he feared that the poet, who had for some time honoured him with his friendship, would take it ill if he should publish an essay which might put his Messias in danger, &c. &c. I was satisfied with his answer, for I had already repented of the sin. If ever I become an author, it shall be on my own account. Moreover, authorship as a trade is not for me. It is incredible how much labour it costs me to accomplish something with which after all I am but half satisfied. The more I write, the more difficult does it become. I see that I want the living fire."

On the same subject he writes to his school and college friend Weisshuhn:—

"I have lived in a new world since I have read the Critique of Practical Reason. Principles which I believed were irrefragable, are refuted; things which I thought could never be proved,—as for example, the idea of absolute freedom, of duty,—are proved; and I am so much the happier. It is indescribable what respect for humanity, what power this system gives us! But why should I say this to you, who have known it longer than I have done? What a blessing to an age in which morality was torn up by the roots, and the name of duty obliterated from every vocabulary!"

And with still greater warmth he speaks of his new studies to Johanna Rahn:—

"My scheming spirit has now found rest, and I thank Providence that, shortly before all my hopes were frustrated, I was placed in a position which enabled me to bear the disappointment with cheerfulness. A circumstance, which seemed the result of mere chance, led me to give myself up entirely to the study of the Kantean philosophy—a philosophy that restrains the imagination, which was always too powerful with me, gives reason the sway, and raises the soul to an indescribable elevation above all earthly concerns. I have accepted a nobler morality, and instead of occupying myself with outward things, I employ myself more with my own being. This has given me a peace such as I have never before experienced: amid uncertain worldly prospects I have passed my happiest days. I shall devote some years of my life to this philosophy; and all that I write, at least for several years to come, shall be upon it. It is difficult beyond all conception, and stands much in need of simplification. . . . . . The principles are indeed hard speculations which have no direct bearing on human life, but their con sequences are most important for an age whose morality is corrupted at the fountain-head; and to set these consequences before the world in a clear light, would, I believe, be doing it a good service. Say to thy dear father, whom I love as my own, that we erred in our inquiries into the necessity of human actions, for although we proceeded with accuracy, we set out from a false principle. I am now thoroughly convinced that the human will is free, and that to be happy is not the purpose of our being,—but to deserve happiness. I have to ask pardon of thee too, for having often led thee astray by such assertions. Achelis was right; without knowing it indeed; and why? Henceforth believe in thine own feelings; thou mayst not be able to confute opposing reasoners, yet they shall be confuted, and are so already, though they do not understand the confutation."

Inspired with this enthusiastic admiration for the Critical Philosophy, he resolved to become the exponent of its principles, and to rescue it from the obscurity which an uncouth terminology had thrown around it. This attempt had indeed been made already, and was still making, by a host of commentators, but the majority of these were either deficient in capacity, or, actuated by sordid motives, had eagerly seized the opportunity of gain which the prevalent excitement afforded, and crowded the literary market with crude and superficial productions. Fichte accordingly commenced an expository abridgment of Kant's Critique of the faculty of judgment. It was to be divided into two parts,—the one devoted to the power of æsthetical, the other to that of teleological judgment. The first part was completed and sent to his friend Weisshuhn for correction, but the progress of the work was interrupted by events which caused him to leave Leipzic: it was never finished, and no part of it was published.

Interesting and remarkable too in this connection is the following passage from a letter written about this time to a literary friend:—

"If I am not deceived by the disposition of youth, which is more ready to hope than to fear, the golden age of our literature is at hand; it will be enduring, and may perhaps surpass the most brilliant period in that of any other nation. The seed which Lessing sowed in his letters, and in his 'Dramaturgie,' now begins to bear fruit. His principles seem every day to be more extensively received and made the foundation of our literary judgments; and Goethe's 'Iphigenie' is the strongest proof of the possibility of their realization. And it seems to me, that he who in his twentieth year wrote the 'Robbers,' will, sooner or later, tread in the same path, and in his fortieth become our 'Sophocles.'"

And so it was!—He who in his twentieth year wrote the "Robbers," did literally in his fortieth produce his "Wallenstein," followed in brilliant succession by "Mary Stuart," "The Maid of Orleans,"—and, last and brightest of the train, by "William Tell,"—a parting gift to the world from the "Sophocles" of Germany.

And now the time drew near which was at once to terminate his struggles with fortune, and realize the dearest wish of his heart. It had been arranged that Fichte should return to Zurich in 1791, to be united with her whom he most loved and honoured upon earth. The noble-minded woman who was now to bind herself to him for ever, had resolved that henceforth he should pursue his literary undertakings, free from the cares of life. But Fichte looked forward to no period of inglorious repose; his ardent spirit had already formed a thousand plans of useful and honourable activity. "Not happiness, but labour," was his principle—a principle which ruled all his actions, in prosperity as well as in adversity. His letters to Johanna Rahn, in anticipation of this joyful event, breathe the same dignified tenderness which characterized their earlier correspondence:—

"And so, dearest, I solemnly devote myself to thee,—

consecrate myself to be *thine.* I thank thee that thou hast thought me not unworthy to be thy companion on the journey of life. I have undertaken much: one day—God grant it be a distant one!—to take the place of thy noble father; to become the recompence of thy early wisdom, of thy child-like love, of thy stedfast virtue. The thought of the great duties which I take upon me, makes me feel how little I am. But the feeling of the greatness of these duties shall exalt me; and thy love, thy too favourable opinion of me, will lend to my imperfection all that I want. There is no land of happiness here below—I know it now—but a land of toil, where every joy but strengthens us for greater labour. Hand in hand we shall traverse it, and encourage and strengthen each other until our spirits—O may it be together!—shall rise to the eternal fountain of all peace. I stand now in fancy at the most important point of my earthly existence, which divides it into two different, very different, portions,—and marvel at the unseen hand which has led me through the first, dangerous part, through the land of perplexity and doubt! How long had I despaired of such a companion as thou, in whom manly dignity and female tenderness are united! What if I had contented myself with some decorated puppet of thy sex?—That Being who rules all things was kinder to me than, in the feeling of my unworthiness, I had dared to wish or hope;—I was led to thee. That Being will do yet more for me. We shall one day, O dearest, stand again at the partition-wall which shall divide our *whole* life into two parts—into an earthly and a spiritual;—and then shall we look upon the latter part of the earthly which we shall have traversed together, as we do now upon its first part; and surely we shall then too marvel at the same wisdom which now calls forth our wonder, but with loftier feelings and with clearer insight. I love to place myself in that position. . . . . .

“The surest means of acquiring a conviction of a life after death, is so to act in this life that we can venture to wish for another. He who feels that if there is a God he must look down graciously upon him, will not be disturbed by arguments *against* his being, and he needs none *for* it. He who has sacrificed so much for virtue that he looks for recompence in a future life, needs no proof of the reality of such a life;—he does not *believe* in it—he *feels* it. And so, thou dear companion for this short life and for eternity, we shall strengthen each other in this conviction, not by arguments but by deeds."

"Leipzic, 1*st March* 1791.

"At the end of this month I shall be free, and have determined to come to thee. I see nothing that can prevent me. I indeed still await the sanction of my parents; but I have been for a long time so well assured of their love—almost, if I may venture to say it, of their deference to my opinion, that I need not anticipate any obstacle on their part.

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"And now, dearest, I turn to thee, passing over all things unconnected with thee, which therefore do not interest me. Is it true, or is it but a sweet dream, that I am so near to the one best joy of my life,—the possession of the noblest of souls, chosen and destined for me by the Creator from among all other souls?—that my happiness, my peace, shall be the object of your wishes, your cares, your prayers? Could my feelings but flow to thee, warm as at this moment they are streaming through my breast, and threatening to burst it asunder!

"Accept me then, dearest maiden, with all my faults. How glad am I to think that I give myself to one who can take me with these faults;—who has wisdom and strength enough to love me with them all,—to help me to destroy them, so that I may one day appear with her, purified from all blemish, before Him who created us for each other!—Never have I been more sincerely penetrated by this feeling of my weakness, than since I received thy last letter, which reminds me of the poverty of all that I have said to thee;

which reminds me of the vacillating state of mind in which I have written to thee. O what a *man* I have been!—People have sometimes attributed to me firmness of character, and I have been vain enough to accept their flattery as truth. To what accident am I indebted for this opinion,—I who have always allowed myself to be guided by circumstances,—whose soul has taken the colours of the events that surrounded me? With great pretensions, which I could never have maintained, I left Zurich. My hopes were all wrecked. Out of despair, more than from taste, I threw myself into the Kantean philosophy, and found a peace for which indeed I have to thank my good health and the free flight of my fancy; and even deceived myself so far as to believe that the sublime thoughts which I imprinted upon my *memory* were natives of my soul. Circumstances led me to another employment less satisfactory to the heart; and the change in my mode of life,—the winter, which never agrees with me,—an indisposition, and the troubles of a short journey,—these things could disturb the deeply-rooted peace of the philosopher, and bring me into a frightful humour! Shall I always be thus tossed to and fro like a wave? Take thou me, then, thou brave soul, and strengthen this indecision.

"Yet while I lament my inconstancy, how happy am I that I can pour out these complaints to a heart which knows me too well to misunderstand me! One of my feelings I can acquit of all fickleness: I can say it boldly, that I have never been untrue to thee, even in thought; and it is a touching proof of thy noble character, that amid all thy tender cares for me, thou hast never been anxious about this.

"The day of my departure is not exactly fixed, and I cannot determine it until I am about to set out. But it will be one of the first days of April. I shall write to thee of it, and I shall also write to thee on my journey."

And now all his brightest dreams were to be fulfilled; his cup was brimming with anticipated delight, the draught of joy was almost at his lips, when it was rudely dashed from his grasp. The day of his departure was already fixed, when the bankruptcy of a mercantile house to which Rahn had entrusted his property, threw the affairs of the latter into disorder, and even threatened to reduce him to indigence in his old age. Happily a part of his property was ultimately saved, but, in the meantime at least, all plans which were founded on his former prosperity were at an end. His misfortunes brought upon him a lingering sickness, by which he was brought to the brink of the grave. His life was preserved by the tender and unremitting cares of his daughter. In those dark years, when scarcely a ray of hope broke the gloom of present calamity, her conduct displayed that high-minded devotion which bears inevitable suffering without a murmur, and almost raises the passive above the active virtues of our nature.

As for Fichte, he had now become enured to disappointment. His courage soon returned to him, but he was filled with chagrin at having no power either to alleviate, or to share, the distresses of one dearer to him than life itself. The world with its difficulties and doubts was once more before him, and once more his indomitable spirit rose superior to them all. He obtained an appointment as tutor in the house of a Polish nobleman at Warsaw, and having announced his departure to Johanna Rahn in a letter in which he bids her be of good courage, and assures her earnestly of his own faithfulness, he once more assumed his pilgrim staff and turned his back upon Leipzic.

His diary written during this pedestrian journey to Poland evinces a clear and acute faculty of observation, and sketches very distinctly the peculiarities of the Saxon and Silesian character. One passage only, and that relative to a different subject, is here quoted:—

"*9th May.*—Arrived at Bischofswerda in good time; drank tea at the inn, and sent my letter to Rammenau. Soon appeared my brother Gotthelf, the kind soul, whom I looked for the previous day at Pillnitz; and immediately after him, Gottlob. My father had not been at home, but he came soon after—the good, honest, kind father! His look, his tone, his reasoning—how much good they always do me! Take away all my learning, O God, and make me such a good, true, faithful *man!*—how much would I gain by the exchange!"

On the 7th of June he arrived at Warsaw, and immediately waited upon his employer the Count Von P——. The Count was a good, easy man, perfectly submissive to the guidance of his wife, a vain, haughty, and whimsical woman. Fichte's pronunciation of the French language was found to be unsatisfactory, and his German bluntness of demeanour still more so. He discovered that this was no place for him, where the teacher was regarded as a hanger-on of the Countess, and no respect was paid to the dignity of his profession. He resigned his office without having entered upon its duties, and having with some difficulty obtained from the Countess, by way of compensation, a sum sufficient for his maintenance for the succeeding two months, he resolved to visit Königsberg, instead of returning directly to his native country, in order that he might have an opportunity of cultivating a personal acquaintance with Kant, his great master in philosophy. Having preached in the Evangelical Church at Warsaw before his departure, he left that city on the 25th of June for Königsberg.

Immediately on his arrival he visited Kant, but his first impressions of the Critical Philosopher do not seem to have been very favourable. His impetuous enthusiasm was chilled by a cold, formal reception, and he retired deeply disappointed. Unwilling, however, to abandon the purpose which had led him to Königsberg, he sought for some means of obtaining a more free and earnest interview, but for some time without success. At last he determined to write a "Kritik aller Offenbarung" (Critique of all Revelation), which should serve as an introduction. He began on the 13th of July, and sent the finished work to Kant on the 18th of August. He went on the 23d to hear the opinion of the philosopher upon it, and was kindly received. He heard a very favourable judgment passed upon his book, but did not attain his principal object—the establishment of a scientific confidence. For the solution of his philosophical doubts he was referred to the Critique of Pure Reason, or to some of the philosopher's friends.

On revising his "Critique of all Revelation," he found that it did not thoroughly express his profoundest thoughts on the subject, and he therefore began to remodel and rewrite it. But here again he was overtaken by want. Counting over his meagre store of money, he found that he had only sufficient for another fortnight. Alone and in a strange country, he knew not what to resolve upon. After having in vain endeavoured to get some employment through the friends to whom he had been introduced by Kant, he determined to reveal to him the situation in which he was placed, and request his assistance to enable him to return to his own land. His letter to Kant on this subject is so strikingly characteristic of its writer, and describes so truly his position at the time, that it is here given at length:—

To Kant.

"You will pardon me, sir, if on the present occasion I address you in writing rather than in speech.

"You have already favoured me with kind recommendations which I had not ventured to ask from you,—a generosity which infinitely increases my gratitude, and gives me courage to disclose myself entirely to you, which otherwise I could not have ventured to do without your direct permission,—a necessity which he who would not willingly reveal himself to every one, feels doubly towards a truly good character.

"In the first place, allow me to assure you, sir, that my resolution to proceed from Warsaw to Königsberg, instead of returning to Saxony, was indeed so far an interested resolution, that it gave me an opportunity of expressing my feelings towards the man to whom I owe all my convictions, principles, character, and even the very effort to possess such,—of profiting, so far as possible in a short time, by your society, and, if allowed, of recommending myself to your favourable notice in my after-life;—but I never could anticipate my present need of your kindness, partly because I considered Königsberg to be fertile in resources,—much more so for example than Leipzic,—and partly because I believed that, in the worst case, I should be able to find employment in Livonia, through a friend who occupies a creditable situation at Riga. I consider this assurance is due—partly to myself, that the feelings which flow purely from my heart may not incur the suspicion of mean selfishness—partly to you, because the free open gratitude of one, whom you have instructed and improved, cannot be indifferent to you.

"I have followed the profession of a private tutor for five years, and during this time have felt so keenly its disagreeable nature,—to be compelled to look upon imperfections which must ultimately entail the worst consequences, and yet be hindered in the endeavour to establish good habits in their stead,—that I had given it up altogether for a year and a half, and, as I thought, for ever. I was induced again to undertake this occupation in Warsaw, without due consideration, by the ill-founded hope that I should find this attempt more fortunate, and perhaps imperceptibly by a view to pecuniary advantage—a resolution the vanity of which has given rise to my present embarrassments. I now, on the contrary, feel every day more strongly the necessity of going over again, before the years of youth have altogether passed away, all those things which the too early praise of well-meaning but unwise teachers,—an academic course almost completed before my entrance on the proper age of youth,—and, since that time, my constant dependence on circumstances,—have caused me to neglect; and resigning all the ambitious views which have impeded my progress, to train myself to all of which I am capable, and leave the rest to Providence. This object I cannot attain anywhere more surely than in my fatherland. I have parents, who cannot indeed relieve my necessities, but with whom I can live at less expense than elsewhere. I can there occupy myself with literary pursuits—my true means of culture, to which I must devote myself, and for which I have too much respect to print anything of the truth of which I am not perfectly certain. By a residence in my native province, too, I could most easily obtain, as a village pastor, the perfect literary quiet which I desire until my faculties are matured. My best course thus seems to be to return home;—but I am deprived of the means: I have only two ducats, and even these are not my own, for I have yet to pay for my lodgings. There appears, then, to be no rescue for me from this situation, unless I can find some one who, although unknown to me, yet, in reliance upon my honour, will advance me the necessary sum for the expenses of my journey, until the time when I can calculate with certainty on being able to make repayment. I know no one to whom I could offer this security without fear of being laughed at to my face, except you, excellent man.

"It is my maxim never to ask anything from another, without having first of all examined whether I myself, were the circumstances inverted, would do the same thing for some one else. In the present case I have found that, supposing I had it in my power, I would do this for any person of whom I believed that he was animated by the principles by which I know that I myself am now governed.

"I am so convinced of a certain sacrifice of honour in thus placing it in pledge, that the very necessity of giving you this assurance seems to deprive me of a part of it myself; and the deep shame which thus falls upon me is the reason why I cannot make an application of this kind verbally, for I must have no witnesses of that shame. My honour seems to me really doubtful until the engagement is fulfilled, because it is always possible for the other party to suppose that I may never fulfil it. Thus I know, that if you, sir, should consent to my request, I would think of you, with heartfelt respect and gratitude indeed, but yet with a kind of shame; and that only after I had redeemed my word, would it be possible for me to call to mind with perfect satisfaction an acquaintance with which I hope to be honoured during life. I know that these feelings arise from temperament, not from principle, and are perhaps reprehensible; but I cannot eradicate them, until principle has acquired sufficient strength to take their place, and so render them superfluous. So far, however, I can rely upon my principles, that, were I capable of forfeiting my word pledged to you, I should despise myself for ever afterwards, and could never again venture to cast a glance into my own soul;—principles which constantly reminded me of you, and of my dishonour, must needs be cast aside altogether, in order to free me from the most painful self-reproach.

"If I were well assured of the existence of such a mode of thinking as this in a man, I would do that for him with confidence which I now ask from you. *How*, and *by what means* I could assure myself, were I in your place, of the existence of such principles, is likewise clear to me.

"If it be permitted me to compare very great things with very small, I argue from your writings, most honoured sir, a character in their author above the ordinary mass of men, and, before I knew anything at all of your mode of acting in common life, I would have ventured to describe it as I now know it to be. For myself, I have only laid open before you a small part of my nature, at a time however when the idea never occurred to me of making such a use of your acquaintance; and my character is not sufficiently formed to express itself fully;—but to compensate for this, you are without comparison a better judge of man than I am, and perhaps may have perceived, even from what you have seen of me, whether or not a love of truth and honour belongs to my character.

"Lastly—and I add this with shame—if I should be found capable of forfeiting my pledge, my worldly reputation is in your hands. It is my intention to become an author in my own name, and if I leave Königsberg, I wish to request from you introductions to some literary men of your acquaintance. To these, whose good opinion I would then owe to you, it would be your duty to communicate my disgrace; as it would generally be a duty, I think, to warn the world against a person of such incorrigible character as he must needs be who could approach a man whose atmosphere is untainted by falsehood, and, by assuming the outward mien of honesty, deceive his acuteness, and so laugh to scorn all virtue and honour.

"These were the considerations, sir, which induced me to write this letter. I am very indifferent about that which does not lie within my power, more indeed through temperament and personal experience, than on principle. It is not the first time that I have been in difficulties out of which I could see no way; but it would be the first time that I remained in them, if I did so now. Curiosity as to what is to come of it, is generally all that I feel in such emergencies. I merely adopt the means which appear the best to my mind, and then calmly await the consequence. And I can do this the more easily in the present case, as I place it in the hands of a good and wise man. But in another point of view I send off this letter with unwonted anxiety. Whatever may be your determination, I shall lose something of comfort and satisfaction in my relation towards you. If it be in the affirmative, I can indeed again acquire what I have lost;—if in the negative, never.

* * * * * *

"For the tone which predominates in this letter, I cannot, sir, ask your pardon. It is one of the distinctions of sages, that he who speaks to them, speaks as a man to men. As soon as I can venture to hope that I do not disturb you, I shall wait upon you, to learn your resolution; and I am, with heartfelt reverence and admiration," &c. &c. &c.

It is difficult to conceive of circumstances short of absolute inability, which could induce a man of refined sentiments, and especially a scholar and a philosopher, to refuse the request contained in this singular letter. We are not informed of the cause of Kant's refusal, and can therefore only hope that it arose from no motive less honourable than that which animated his noble-minded suitor. But the request *was* refused, and Fichte once more reduced to extremity. He endeavoured to dispose of the manuscript of his "Kritik aller Offenbarung;"—but Hartung, the bookseller to whom Kant had recommended him to apply, was from home, and he offered it in vain to any other. The very heroism of his life seemed to be the source of his ever-recurring difficulties;—and truly, he who has resolved to lead a life of high purpose and endeavour, must be content to relinquish the advantages which are the common reward of plodding worldliness or successful knavery. He does relinquish them without a murmur, or rather he never seeks them;—his thoughts aspire to a loftier recompence, and that he will surely attain.

But light once more dawned on these dark and hopeless prospects; and that from a quarter whence it was least of all expected. When the little money which he had remaining was almost entirely exhausted, he received an invitation, through the Court-preacher Schulz, to a tutorship in the family of the Count of Krokow, in the neighbourhood of Dantzig. Although, as we have seen, his views were now directed to a life of literary exertion, yet necessity compelled him to accept this proposal; and he entered on his new employment, experiencing the most friendly reception and the kindest attentions. The amiable character and excellent abilities of the Countess rendered his residence in her family not only happy, but interesting and instructive;—his letters at this period are full of her praises. This fortunate appointment was but the beginning of many years of uninterrupted prosperity which now awaited him. Fortune seemed to have tired of her relentless persecutions, and now resolved to shine graciously upon his path.

Through the agency of his friends at Königsberg he now made arrangements with Hartung for the publication of his " Kritik aller Offenbarung." When the book was submitted to the censorship of the Dean of the Theological Faculty at Halle, where it was to be printed, he refused his sanction on account of the principle contained in it,—*That no proof of the divinity of a revelation is to be derived from an appeal to miracles occurring in connection with it, but that the question of its authenticity can be decided only by an examination of the contents of the supposed revelation.* Fichte urged that his book was a philosophical, not a theological essay, and therefore did not properly come under the cognizance of the Theological Faculty;—but this plea was urged in vain. His friends advised him to withdraw the obnoxious passages; even Schulz, who united theological orthodoxy with his ardent Kantism, advised him to do so. But on this point Fichte was inflexible; he determined that the book should be printed entire, or not printed at all. He resolved, however, to consult Kant on the subject, as the highest authority to whom he could appeal. As this question has now begun to excite some interest in the philosophico-theological world of England and America, it is deemed advisable to insert here the gist of this correspondence, embodying as it does the views of two most eminent men, who, both by their mental endowments and by their position in life, were better qualified than most other men to give an impartial judgment on the matter at issue.

Fichte to Kant.

"*22d January* 1792.

"A friend whom I respect has written to me a kind and touching letter upon this subject, in which he requests that, in the event of a possible revision of the work during the delay which has occurred in printing, I should endeavour to set two points, upon which we are at issue, in another light. I have said, that faith in a given revelation cannot reasonably be founded upon belief in miracles, because no miracle is demonstrable *as such;* but I have added in a note, that it may be allowable to employ the idea of miracles having occurred in connection with a revelation, in order to direct the attention of those, who need the aid of outward and sensible manifestations, to the other sufficient grounds upon which the revelation may be received as divine;—the only modification of the former principle which I can admit. I have said, further, that a revelation cannot extend *the materials* either of our dogmatic or our moral knowledge; but I admit, that upon transcendental objects, in the *fact* of whose existence we believe, but can know nothing whatever of the mode of that existence, it may furnish us with something in the room of experience—something which, for those who so conceive of such matters, shall possess a subjective truth,—which, however, is not to be received as a substantial addition to, but only as an embodied and formal manifestation of, those spiritual things possessed by us *a priori.* Notwithstanding continued reflection upon these points, I have hitherto found no reason which can justify me in altering my conclusions. May I venture to ask you, sir, as the most competent judge, to tell me in two words, whether any other results upon these points are to be sought for, and if so, in what direction;—or if these are the only grounds on which a critique of the Revelation-idea can safely proceed? If you will favour me with these two words of reply, I shall make no use of them inconsistent with the deep respect I entertain for you. As to my friend's letter, I have already said in answer, that I do not cease to give my attention to the subject, and shall always be ready to retract what I am convinced is erroneous.

"As to the prohibition of the censor, after the clearly-declared object of the essay, and the tone which predominates throughout its pages, I can only wonder at it. I cannot understand where the Theological Faculty acquired the right to apply their censorship to such a mode of treating such a subject."

Kant's Reply.

"2*d February* 1792.

"You desire to be informed by me whether any remedy can be found against the strict censorship under which your book has fallen, without entirely laying it aside. I answer, none;—so far as, without having read the book thoroughly, I can determine from what your letter announces as its leading principle, namely,—'that faith in a given revelation cannot reasonably be founded on a belief in miracles.'

"For it inevitably follows from this, that a religion can contain only such articles of faith as likewise belong to the province of pure reason. This principle is in my opinion quite unobjectionable, and neither abolishes the subjective necessity of a revelation, nor of miracle (for it may be assumed, that whether or not it might have been possible for reason, unaided by revelation, to have discovered those articles, which, now when they *are* actually before us, may indeed be comprehended by reason;—yet it may have been necessary *to introduce* them by miracles,—which, however, now when religion can support itself and its articles of faith, need not longer be relied upon as the foundation of belief):—but according to the maxims which seem to be adopted by the censor, this principle will not carry you through. For, according to these, certain writings must be received into the profession of faith *according to their letter*, since it is difficult for human understanding to comprehend them, and much more for human reason to conceive of them as true; and hence they really need the continued support of miracle, and thus only can become articles of reasonable belief. The view which represents revelation as merely a sensible manifestation of these principles in accommodation to human weakness, and hence as possessed of subjective truth only, is not sufficient for the censor, for his views demand the recognition of its objective truth according to the letter.

"One way however remains open, to bring your book into harmony with the ideas of the censor: *i. e.* if you can make him comprehend and approve the distinction between a *dogmatic belief* raised above all doubt, and a mere *moral admission,* resting on the insufficiency of reason to satisfy its own wants; for then the faith which good moral sentiment reposes upon miracle may probably thus express itself: 'Lord, I believe'—(that is, I *receive* it willingly, although I cannot *prove* it sufficiently)—'help thou mine unbelief!'—that is, 'I have a moral faith in respect of all that I can draw from the miraculous narrative for the purposes of inward improvement, and I desire to possess an historical belief in so far as that can contribute to the same end. My unintentional non-belief is not confirmed unbelief.' But you will not easily make this distinction acceptable to a censor who, it is to be feared, makes historical belief an unconditional religious duty.

"With these hastily, but not inconsiderately thrown out ideas, you may do whatever seems good to you (provided you are yourself convinced of their truth), without making any direct or indirect allusion to him who communicates them."

Fichte to Kant.

"*17th February* 1792.

"Your kind letter has given me much gratification, as well on account of the goodness which so soon fulfilled my request, as on account of the matter it contains: upon that subject I now feel all the peace of mind which, next to one's own conviction, the authority of a man who is honoured above all other men can give.

"If I have rightly conceived your meaning, I have actually pursued in my work the middle course which you point out—of distinguishing between an affirmative belief, and a faith founded on moral considerations. I have endeavoured carefully to distinguish between that which, according to my principle, is the only possible and reasonable kind of faith in the divinity of a given revelation (that faith, namely, which has for its object only a *certain form* of the truths of religion)—and the belief which accepts these truths in themselves as postulates of pure reason. This faith is only a free acceptance of the divine origin of a particular form of religious truth grounded on experience of the efficacy of such a form as a means of moral perfection;—such an acceptance, indeed, as no one can prove either to himself or others, but which, on the other hand, cannot be refuted; an acceptance which is merely subjective, and, unlike the faith of pure reason, is not universally binding, since it is founded on individual experience alone. I believe that I have placed this distinction in a tolerably clear light, and I have endeavoured to set forth fully the practical consequences of these principles; namely, that while they save us the labour of forcing our own subjective convictions upon others, they secure to every one the undisturbed possession of everything in religion which he can apply to his own improvement, and thus silence the opponents of positive religion, not less than its dogmatical defenders—principles for which I do not deserve the anger of the truth-loving theologian. But yet it has so fallen out; and I am now determined to leave the book as it is, and to allow the publisher to deal with the matter as he chooses."

The difficulty which gave rise to the preceding letters was happily got rid of by a change in the censorship. The new dean, Dr. Knapp, did not partake in the scruples of his predecessor; he gave his consent to the publication, and the work appeared at Easter 1792. At first it was universally ascribed to Kant. The journals devoted to the Critical Philosophy teemed with laudatory notices, until at length Kant found it necessary publicly to disclaim the paternity of the book by disclosing its real author.

The "Kritik aller Offenbarung" is an attempt to determine the natural and necessary conditions, under which alone a revelation from a superior intelligence to man is possible, and consequently to lay down the criteria by which anything that claims the character of such a revelation is to be tested. The design, as well as the execution, of the work is strikingly characteristic of its author; for, although the form of the Kantean philosophy is much more distinctly impressed upon this, his first literary production, than upon his subsequent writings, yet it does not, it cannot conceal those brilliant qualities to which he owed his future fame. That profound and searching intellect, which, in the province of pure metaphysics, cast aside as fallacious and deceptive those solid-seeming principles on which ordinary men are content to take their stand, and clearing its way to the most hidden depths of thought, sought there a firm foundation on which to build a structure of human knowledge, whose summit should tower as high above common faith as its base was sunk deep below common observation,—does here, when applied to a question of practical judgment, exhibit the same clearness of vision, strength of thought, and subtilty of discrimination. In the conduct of this inquiry, Fichte manifests the same single eye to truth, and reverent devotion to her when found, which characterize all his writings and his life. His book has nothing in common with those superficial attacks upon revelation, or equally superficial defences of it, which are so rife in our days, and which afford so much scope for petty personal animosities.

The mathematician, while constructing his theorem, does not pause to inquire who may be interested in its future applications; nor does the philosopher, while calmly settling the conditions and principles of *knowledge*, concern himself about what *opinions* may ultimately be found incompatible with them:—these may take care of themselves. Far above the dark vortex of theological strife in which punier intellects chafe and vex themselves in vain, Fichte struggles forward to the sunshine of pure thought, which sectarianism cannot see, because its weakened vision is already filled with a borrowed and imperfect light. "Form and style," he says in his preface, "are my affair; the censure or contempt which these may incur affects me alone;—and that is of little moment. The result is the affair of truth, and *that* is of moment. That must be subjected to a strict, but careful and impartial examination. I at least have acted impartially. I may have erred, and it would be astonishing if I had not. What measure of correction I may deserve, let the public decide. Every judgment, however expressed, I shall thankfully acknowledge; every objection which seems incompatible with the cause of truth, I shall meet as well as I can. To truth I solemnly devote myself, at my first entrance into public life. Without respect of party or of reputation, I shall always *acknowledge* that to be truth which I recognize as such, come whence it may; and never acknowledge that which I do not believe. The public will pardon me for having thus spoken of myself, on this first and only occasion. It may be of little importance to the world to receive this assurance, but it is of importance to me to call upon it to bear witness to this my solemn vow." Never was vow more nobly fulfilled!

Early in 1793, Fichte left Dantzig for Zurich, to accomplish the wish dearest to his heart. The following extracts are from a letter written shortly before his departure:—

To Johanna Rahn.

"Dantzig, 5th March 1793.

"In June, or at the latest July, I shall be with thee: but I should wish to enter the walls of Zurich as thy husband —Is that possible? Thy kind heart will give no hindrance to my wishes; but I do not know the circumstances. But I hope, and this hope comforts me much.——God! what happiness dost thou prepare for me, the unworthy!——I have never felt so deeply convinced that my existence is not to be in vain for the world, as when I read thy letter. What I receive in thee, I have not deserved; it can therefore be only a means of strengthening me for the labour and toil which yet await me. Let thy life but flow smoothly on,—thou sweet, dear one!

"Thou wilt fashion thyself by me! What I could perhaps give thee, thou dost not need; what thou canst bestow on me, I need much. Do thou, good, kind one, shed a lasting peace upon this tempestuous heart; pour gentle and winning mildness over my fiery zeal for the ennobling of my fellow-men. By thee will I fashion myself, till I can go forth again more usefully.

"I have great, glowing projects. My ambition (pride rather) thou canst understand. It is to purchase my place in the human race with deeds, to bind up with my existence eternal consequences for humanity and the whole spiritual world; no one need know that *I* do it, if it be only done. What I shall be in the civil world, I know not. If instead of immediate *activity* I be destined to *speech*, my desire has already anticipated thy wish that it should be rather from a pulpit than from a chair. There is at present no want of prospects of that kind. Even from Saxony I receive most profitable invitations. I am about to go to Lubeck and Hamburg. In Dantzig they are unwilling to let me go. All that for the future! That I am not idle, I have shown by refusing, within this half year, many invitations which would have been very alluring to idlers. For the present I will be nothing but *Fichte.*

"I may perhaps desire an office in a few years. I hope it will not be wanting. Till then I can get what I require by my pen: at least, it has never failed me yet, in my many wanderings and sacrifices."

Fichte arrived in Zurich on the 16th day of June 1793, after having once more visited his parents, and received their cordial approbation of his future plans. In consequence, however, of some delays arising out of the laws of that state affecting foreigners, it was not until the 22d October that his marriage with Johanna Rahn took place. After a short tour in Switzerland, in the course of which his already widespread fame brought him into contact with several distinguished men,—Baggesen, Pestalozzi, &c.,—he took up his residence in the house of his father-in-law. Here he enjoyed for several months a life of undisturbed repose, in the society of her whose love had been his stay in times of adversity and doubt, and now gave to prosperity a keener relish and a holier aim.

But while happiness and security dwelt in the peaceful Swiss canton, the rest of Europe was torn asunder by that fearful convulsion which made the close of last century the most remarkable period in the history of the world. Principles which had once bound men together in bonds of truth and fealty had become false and hollow mockeries; and that evil time had arrived in which those who were nominally the leaders and rulers of the people had ceased to command their reverence and attachment; nay, by countless oppressions and follies, had become the objects of their bitter hatred and contempt. And now one nation speaks forth the word which all are struggling to utter, and soon every eye is turned upon France,—the theatre on which the new act in the drama of human history is to be acted; where freedom and right are once more to become realities; where man, no longer a mere appendage to the soil, is to start forth on a new career of activity and honour, and show the world the spectacle of an ennobled and regenerated race. The enslaved of all nations rouse themselves at the shout of deliverance; the patriot's heart throbs higher at the cry—the poet dreams of a new golden age—the philosopher looks with eager eye for the solution of the mighty problem of human destiny. All, alas! are doomed to disappointment; and over the grave where their hopes lie buried, a lesson of fearful significance stands inscribed in characters of desolation and blood, proclaiming to all ages that where the law of liberty is not written upon the soul, outward freedom is a mockery, and unchecked power a curse.

In 1793 Fichte published his "Contributions to the correction of public opinion upon the French Revolution." The leading principle of this work is, that there is, and can be, no absolutely unchangeable political constitution, because none absolutely perfect can be realized;—the relatively best constitution must therefore carry within itself the principle of change and improvement. And if it be asked from whom this improvement should proceed, it is replied, that all parties to the political contract ought equally to possess this right. And by this political contract is to be understood, not any actual and recorded agreement—for both the old and new opponents of this view think they can destroy it at once by the easy remark that we have no historical proof of the existence of such a contract—but the abstract idea of a State, which, as the peculiar foundation of all rights, should lie at the bottom of every actual political fabric. The work comprises also an inquiry concerning the privileged classes in society, particularly the nobility and clergy, whose prerogatives are subjected to a prolonged and rigid scrutiny. In particular, the conflict between the universal rights of reason, and historical privileges which often involve great injustice, is brought prominently into notice. This book brought upon Fichte the charge of being a democrat, which was afterwards extended into that of atheism! The following passage is from his own defence against the former charge, written at a later period:—

"And so I am a democrat!—And what *is* a democrat? One who represents the democratic form of government as the only just one, and recommends its introduction? I should think, if he does this merely in his writings, that, even under a monarchical government, the refutation of his error, if it be an error, might be left to other literary men. So long as he makes no direct attempt to overthrow the existing government and put his own scheme in its place, I do not see how his opinions can come before the judgment-seat of the state, which takes cognizance of actions only. However, I know that my opponents think otherwise on this point. Let them think so if they choose: does the accusation then justly apply to me?—am I a democrat in the foregoing sense of that word? They may indeed have neither heard nor read anything about me, since they settled this idea in their minds, and wrote "democrat" over my head in their imaginations. Let them look at my "Principles of Natural law," vol. i. p. 189, &c. It is impossible to name any writer who has declared more decidedly, and on stronger grounds, *against* the democratic form of government as an absolutely illegitimate form. Let them make a fair extract from that book. They will find that I require a submission to law, a jurisdiction of law over the actions of the citizen, such as was never before demanded by any teacher of jurisprudence, and has never been attempted to be realized in any constitution. Most of the complaints which I have heard against this system have turned on the assertion that it derogated too much from the freedom (licentiousness and lawlessness) of men. I am thus far from preaching anarchy.

"But they do not attach a definite and scientific meaning to the word. If all the circumstances in which they use this expression were brought together, it might perhaps be possible to say what particular sense they annex to it; and it is quite possible that, in this sense, I may be a very decided democrat;—it is at least so far certain, that I would rather not be at all, than be the subject of caprice and not of law."

During the period of his residence at Zurich, however, Fichte's attention was occupied with another subject, more important to science and to his own future fame, than his political speculations. This was the philosophical system on which his reputation chiefly rests. It would be altogether out of place in the present Memoir to enter at large upon a subject so vast and profound, if indeed it might not prove altogether impossible to present, in any form intelligible to the ordinary English reader, the results of these abstruse and difficult speculations. Yet the peculiarities of Fichte's philosophical system are so intimately bound up with the personal character of its author, that both lose something of their completeness when considered apart from each other. And it is principally with a view to illustrate the harmony between his life and his philosophy that an attempt is here made to point out some of its distinguishing features. As Fichte's system may be considered the complement of those which preceded it, we must view it in connection with the more important of these; and for the same reason we shall speak of it here, not as it shaped itself at first in the mind of its author, but in the developed and finally completed form in which he taught it at a later period of his life.

The final results of the philosophy of Locke were two-fold. In France, the school of Condillac, imitating the example of the English philosopher rather than following out his first principles, occupied itself exclusively with the phenomena of sensation, leaving out of sight the no less indisputable facts to which reflection is our sole guide. The consequence was a system of unmixed materialism, a deification of physical nature, and ultimately, avowed atheism. In Great Britain, the philosophy of experience was more justly treated: both sources of human knowledge which Locke indicated at the outset of his inquiry—although in the body of his essay he analyzed one of them only—were recognized by his followers in his own land, until Bishop Berkeley resolved the phenomena of sensation into those of reflection; and the same method which in France led to materialism, in England produced a system of intellectual idealism. Berkeley's principles were pushed to the extreme by Hume, who, applying to the phenomena of reflection precisely the same analysis which Berkeley applied to those of sensation, demolished the whole fabric of human knowledge, and revealed, under the seemingly substantial foundations on which men had hitherto built their faith, a yawning gulf of impenetrable obscurity and scepticism. Feeling, thought, nay consciousness itself, become but fleeting phantasms without any abiding subject in which they inhere.

It may be safely affirmed, that notwithstanding the outcry which greeted the publication of the "Essay of Human Nature," and the senseless virulence which still loads the memory of its author with abuse, none of his critics have hitherto succeeded in detecting a fallacy in his main argument. Those distinguished philosophers who are generally known by the name of the Scotch School, or the School of Common Sense, although deserving of all gratitude for their acute investigations into the intellectual and moral powers of man, have yet confined themselves chiefly to the department of psychological analysis, and have thrown little direct light on the great difficulties of metaphysical speculation. This was reserved for the modern school of Germany, of which Kant may be considered the head. Stewart, although contemporary with the philosopher of Königsberg, seems to have had not only an imperfect, but a quite erroneous, conception of his doctrines.

Kant admitted the validity of Hume's conclusions, on the premises from which he deduced them. He admitted that the human intellect could not go beyond itself, could not furnish us with any other than subjective knowledge. The impressions which we receive from without, having to pass through the prism of certain inherent faculties or "categories" of the understanding, by which their original character is modified, or perhaps altogether changed,—we are not entitled to draw from them any conclusions upon the nature of the source whence they emanate. But is the outward world, which we are thus forced to abandon to doubt, the only reality for man? Do we not find in consciousness something more than a cognitive faculty? We find besides, will, freedom, self-determination; and here is a world altogether independent of sense and of the knowledge of outward things. Freedom is the root, the very ground-work of our being; free determination is the most intimate and certain fact in our nature. But to this freedom we find an absolute law addressed,—the unconditional law of morality—demanding fulfilment. Here, then, in the super-sensual world of duty, of free obedience, of moral determination, we have the true world of man, in which the moral agent is the only existence, the moral act the only reality. Between the world of sense and the world of morality stands the æsthetic world, or the system of relations we hold to the outward world through our ideas of the beautiful, the sublime, &c.;—and these three worlds exhaust the elements of human consciousness.

But while Kant, by throwing the bridge of æsthetic feeling over the chasm which separates the sensible from the purely spiritual world, established an outward communication between them, he did not attempt to reconcile—he maintained the impossibility of reconciling—their essential opposition. It is in this reconciliation,—in tracing this opposition to its source,—in the establishment of the unity of the sensual and super-sensual worlds, that Fichte's "Wissenchaftslehre" follows out and completes the philosophical system of which Kant had laid the foundation. In it, for the first time, philosophy becomes, not a theory of knowledge, but knowledge itself; for in it the apparent division of the subject thinking from the object thought of, is abolished by penetrating to the primitive unity out of which this opposition has arisen.

The origin of this opposition, and the principle by which it is to be reconciled, must be sought for in the nature of the thinking subject itself. What is our idea of that nature? We feel ourselves to be acted upon by influences from without, and on the other hand to exercise an influence on things without; limited ourselves, and at the same time the cause of limitation to something beyond us. But whence do we derive this double conception? It is not derived;—it is a part of ourselves. Let us try to conceive of our own being apart from any other—abstracted from all other existence. We cannot do it. The fundamental character of finite being is thus the supposition of itself (*thesis*); and of something opposed to itself (*antithesis*); which two conceptions are reciprocal, mutually imply each other, and are hence identical (*synthesis.*) The *Ego* supposes the *Non-Ego*, and is supposed in it;—the two conceptions are indissoluble; nay, they are but one conception. In the different aspects which this double conception assumes, we have an endless chain of finite and reciprocally active existences, forming together the abstract idea of *Finity*, which again supposes its opposite, *Infinity*. As conceived of by the finite subject, the idea of infinity must come under the conditions of finite thought, and can thus only be the *Highest* that finite thought can reach—an absolute Ego, in whose self-determination *all* the Non-Ego is determined.

The aspect of the finite Ego towards the Non-Ego is practical; towards the infinite Ego, speculative. In the first relation we find ourselves surrounded by existences, over one part of which we exercise causality, and with the other (in whom we suppose an independent causality) we are in a state of reciprocal influence. In these relations the active and moral powers of man find their sphere. The moral law imparts to its objects—to all things whose existence is implied in its fulfilment—the same certainty which belongs to itself. The outward world cannot be unreal, for we have imperative duties to perform which demand its reality. Life ceases to be an empty show without truth or significance;—it is our field of duty, the theatre on which our moral destiny is to be wrought out. The voice of conscience, of highest reason, bids us know and love and honour beings like ourselves, and those beings crowd around us. The ends of their and our existence demand the powers and appliances of physical life for their attainment;—that life, and the means of sustaining and using it, stand before us. The world is nothing more than the *sphere* and *object* of human activity; it exists because the purposes of our moral life require its existence. Of the law of duty we are immediately certain; of the existence of the world we are assured by means of that previous certainty. Our life begins with an action, not a thought; we do not act because we know, but we know because we are called upon to act.

But not only does the law of human activity require our belief in its immediate objects and implements; it also points to a purpose, an aim, in our actions lying beyond themselves, to which they stand related as means to an end. Not that the moral law of activity is dependent on the perception of this end—the moral law is absolute and imperative in itself—but we necessarily connect with our actions some future result as a consequence to which they inevitably tend, as the final accomplishment of the purpose which gave them birth. The moral sense cannot find such a fulfilment in the present life;—the forces of nature, the desires and passions of men, constantly oppose its dictates. It revolts against the permanence of things as they now are, and unceasingly strives to make them better. Nor can the individual look for such an accomplishment of the moral law of his nature in the progressive improvement of his species. Were the highest grade of earthly perfection conceived and attained in the physical and moral world—(as it is conceivable and attainable)—reason would still propose a higher grade beyond it. And even this measure of perfection could not be appropriated by humanity as its own,—as the result of its own exertions,—but must be considered as the creation of an unknown power, by whose unseen agency the basest passions of men, and even their vices and crimes, have been made the instruments of this consummation; while too often their good resolutions appear altogether lost to the world, or even to retard the purposes which they were apparently designed to promote. The chain of material causes and effects does not depend on the motives and feelings which prompt an action, but solely on the action itself; and the purposes of mere physical existence would be as well, or better, promoted by an unerring mechanism, than by the agency of free beings. Nevertheless, if moral obedience be a reasonable service, it must have its result; if the reason which commands it be not an utterly vain delusion, its law must be fulfilled. That law is the first principle of our nature, and it gives us the assurance, our faith in which no difficulty can shake, that no moral act can be fruitless, no work of reason utterly lost. A chain of causes and effects, in which freedom is superfluous and without aim, cannot thus be the limit of our existence; the law of our being cannot be fulfilled in the world of sense;—there must then be a super-sensual world in which it may be accomplished. In this purely spiritual world, *will* alone is the first link of a chain of consequences which pervades the whole invisible realm of being; as *action*, in the sensual world, is the first link of a material chain which runs through the whole system of nature. Will is the active living principle of the super-sensual world; it may break forth in a material act which belongs to the sensual world, and do there that which pertains to a material act to do;—but, independently of all physical manifestation, it flows forth in endless spiritual activity. Here human freedom is untrammeled by earthly obstructions, and the moral law of our being may find that accomplishment which it sought in vain in the world of sense.

But although we are immediately conscious that our will, our moral activity, must lead to consequences beyond itself, we yet cannot know *what* those consequences may be, nor *how* they are possible. In respect of the nature of these results, the present life is, in relation to the future, *a life in faith.* In the future life we shall possess these results, for we shall then make them the groundwork of new activity, and thus the future life will be, in relation to the present, *a life in sight.* But the spiritual world is even now with us, for we are already in possession of the principle from which it springs. Our will, our free activity, is the only attribute which is solely and exclusively our own; and by it we are already citizens of the eternal world; the kingdom of heaven is here, or nowhere—it cannot become more immediately present at any point of finite existence. This life is the beginning of our being; the outward world is freely given to us as a firm ground on which we may commence our course; the future life is its continuance, for which we must ourselves create a starting-period in the present; and should the aim of this second life prove as unattainable to finite power, as the end of the first is to us now, then the fresh strength, the firmer purpose, the clearer sight which shall be its immediate growth, will open to us another and a higher sphere of activity. But the world of duty is an infinite world;—every finite exertion has but a definite aim;—and beyond the highest point toward which our labouring being strives, a higher still appears; and to such progression we can conceive no end. By free determination—in the effort after moral perfection, we have laid hold on eternal life.

In the physical world we see certain phenomena following each other with undeviating regularity. We cannot say that what we name *cause* has in itself any power over that which we call *effect*,—that there is any relation between them except that of invariable sequence. We suppose a law under which both subsist, which regulates the mode of their existence, and by the efficiency of which the order of their succession is determined. So likewise, in the spiritual world, we entertain the firmest conviction that our moral will is connected with certain consequences, though we cannot understand how mere will can of itself produce such consequences. We here again conceive of a law under which our will, and the will of all finite beings, exists, in virtue of which it is followed by certain results, and out of which all our relations with other beings arise. So far as our will is simply an internal act, complete in itself, it lies wholly within our own power;—so far as it is a fact in the super-sensual world—the first of a train of spiritual consequences, it is not dependent on ourselves, but on the law which governs the super-sensual world. But the super-sensual world is a world of freedom, of living activity; its principle cannot be a mechanical force, but must itself possess this freedom—this living activity. It can be nothing else than self-determining reason. But self-determining reason is will. The law of the super-sensual world must thus be a *Will:*—a will operating without material implement or manifestation; which is in itself both act and product—which is eternal and unchangeable; so that on it finite beings may securely rely, as the physical man does on the laws of his world,—that through it, all their moral acts of will, and these only, shall lead to certain and unfailing results. *In* this Living Will, as the principle of the spiritual world, has our moral will its first consequence, and *through* Him its energy is propagated throughout the series of finite beings who are the products of the Infinite Will. He is the spiritual bond which unites all free beings together: not immediately can they know or influence each other, for they are separated from each other by an impassable barrier;—their mutual knowledge comes through Him alone, to whom all are equally related. Our faith in duty, and in the objects of duty, is only faith in Him, in His wisdom, in His truth. He is thus the creator and sustainer of all things, for in Him alone all the thronging forms which people our dream of life "live and move and have their being." All partake His essence:—material nature disappears, but its images are invested with a new reality. All our life is His life; and we are eternal, for He is eternal. Birth and the grave are no more, but, in their stead, undying energy and immortal youth. Of Him—the Infinite One,—of the mode of His being, we know nothing, nor need we to know; we cannot pierce the inaccessible light in which He dwells, but through the shadows which veil His presence from us, an endless stream of life and power and action flows around and about us, bearing us and all finite things onward to new life and love and beauty.

"The ONE remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments."

All death in nature is birth,—the assumption of a new garment, to replace the old vesture which humanity has laid aside in its progress to higher being. And serene above all change, the unattainable object of all finite effort—fountain of our life—home of our spirits,—Thou art—the One Being,—the I AM,—for whom reason has no idea, and language no name.

"Sublime and living Will, named by no name, compassed by no thought, I may raise my soul to Thee, for Thou and I are not divided. Thy voice is heard within me, mine is heard by Thee, and all my thoughts, if they are good and true, live in Thee alone. In Thee, the Incomprehensible, I myself, and the world in which I live, stand clear before me; all the secrets of my existence are laid open, and perfect harmony arises in my soul.

"Thou art best known to the childlike, devoted, simple heart. To it Thou art the searcher of all hearts, who seest the minds of men; the ever-present true witness of their thoughts, who knowest if they are good, who knowest them though all the world know them not. Thou art the Father who ever desirest their good, who rulest all things for the best. To Thy will they resign themselves: 'Do with me,' they say, 'what Thou wilt; I know that it is good, for it is Thou who doest it.' The inquisitive understanding, which has heard of Thee, but seen Thee not, would teach us Thy nature, and, as Thy image, shows us a monstrous and incongruous shape, which the sagacious laugh at, and the wise and good abhor.

"I hide my face before Thee, and lay my hand upon my mouth. *How* Thou art, and seemest to Thine own being, I can never know, any more than I can assume Thy nature. After thousands upon thousands of spirit-lives, I shall comprehend Thee as little as I do now in this earthly house. That which I conceive, becomes finite through my very conception of it, and this can never, even by endless exaltation, rise into the infinite. Thou differest from men, not in degree but in nature. In every stage of their advancement they think of Thee as a greater *man*, and still a greater, but never as God—the Infinite,—whom no measure can mete. I have only this discursive, progressive thought, and I can conceive of no other. How can I venture to ascribe it to Thee? In the idea of *person* there are imperfections, limitations. How can I clothe Thee with it without these?

"I will not attempt that which the imperfection of my nature forbids, and which would be useless to me:—*how* Thou art, I may not know. But Thy relations to me—the mortal—and to all mortals, lie open before my eyes, were I only what I should be;—they surround me as clearly as the consciousness of my own existence. *Thou workest* in me the knowledge of my duty, of my vocation in the world of reasonable beings:—*how*, I know not, nor need I to know.

Thou knowest what I think and what I will:—*how* Thou canst know, through what act thou bringest about that consciousness, I cannot understand,—nay, I know that the idea of an act, of a particular act of consciousness, belongs to me alone, and not to Thee. *Thou willest* that my free obedience shall bring with it eternal consequences:—the act of Thy will I cannot comprehend—I only know that it is not like mine. *Thou doest,* and Thy will itself is the deed; but the way of Thy working is not as my ways—I cannot trace it. *Thou livest and art,* for Thou knowest and willest and workest, omnipresent to finite reason; but Thou *art not* as *I* now and always must conceive of being." *

Such is a very broken and imperfect outline of the most complete system of transcendental idealism ever offered to the world. To those few among British students, who, amid the prevailing degradation of sentiment and frivolity of thought, have pondered the deep mysteries of being until the common logic, which pretends to grasp its secret, seems a vain and presumptuous trifling with questions which lie far beyond its reach, and who find in the theological solution but a dry and worthless husk which conceals the kernel of truth it was only meant to preserve,—to such it may be no unacceptable service to have pointed the way to a modern Academe, where the moral dignity of the Athenian sage is united with the poetic sublimity and intellectual keenness of his two most distinguished pupils. If by such humble guidance any should be induced to turn aside towards that retreat, let them not be deterred if at first the path should seem to lack something of the smoothness of the well-trodden highway on which they have hitherto travelled;—let them proceed courageously;—it will lead them into calm sunshine, and beside clear and refreshing streams;—nor shall they return thence without nobler thoughts and higher aspirations.

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* Bestimmung des Menschen, Book iii.—This is the most popular exposition of Fichte's philosophy which exists, and from it the substance of the preceding abstract has been taken. It was first published in 1799, at Berlin. A complete and uniform edition of Fichte's works is at present (1845) in course of publication, under the superintendence of his son.

Fichte lived in close retirement in Zurich. The manners of the inhabitants did not please him, and he seldom came out into society. His wife, his father-in-law, Lavater, and a few others, composed his circle. It is pleasing to know that the celebrated and venerable preacher preserved, even in advanced age, a keen relish for new truth—a perfect openness of mind not frequently met with in his profession. At his request Fichte prepared a short course of lectures, by which his friends might be introduced to an acquaintance with the Critical Philosophy, the fame of which had now reached Switzerland. At the conclusion of the lectures, Lavater addressed a letter of thanks to his young instructor, full of expressions of gratitude and esteem, in which he styles himself his "pupil, friend, and fellow-man." Up to the period of his death, this excellent man retained the warmest feelings of friendship towards the philosopher;—and the following lines, written some years after Fichte's departure from Zurich, whatever may be their value in other respects, serve at least to show the respect, almost approaching to reverence, with which Fichte was regarded by one who was himself no ordinary man:—

"Denkzeile nach meinem Tode, an Herrn Professor Fichte—1800.

"Unerreichbarer Denker, Dein Daseyn beweist mir das Daseyn
Eines ewigen Geistes, dem hohe Geister entstrahlen!
Könntest je Du zweifeln: ich stellte Dich selbst vor Dich selbst nur;
Zeigte Dir in Dir selbst den Strahl des ewigen Geistes."

Although Fichte had as yet published nothing to which his name was attached, he had nevertheless acquired an extensive philosophical reputation. In several powerful and searching criticisms which appeared in the "Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung," the hand of the author of the "Critique of Revelation" was discovered. He was now generally looked upon as the man who was destined to complete the philosophy of Kant. He was thus led into literary correspondence with some of the most distinguished men of the day. At the head of these must be placed Reinhold, the professor of philosophy at Jena, who had hitherto stood first among the disciples of Kant. The relation between these two celebrated men was a most remarkable one. Although their characters were very different, although they never saw each other, they lived on terms of the most intimate and trustful confidence, such as is commonly attained by long-tried friendship alone. In their extensive correspondence, Fichte's powerful and commanding intellect evidently possesses great ascendency over the more diffident and pliable nature of Reinhold; but his influence never interferes with the mental freedom of his friend. On the other hand, Reinhold's open and enthusiastic character, and his pure love of truth, engaged the warm affection and sympathy of his more daring correspondent;—while the frequent misunderstandings, which lend an almost dramatic interest to their letters, afford room for the exhibition of manly and generous kindness in both. In 1797 Reinhold abandoned his own system and accepted the "Wissenschaftslehre," announcing the change to Fichte in the following terms:—

"I have at length come to understand your "Wissenschaftslehre," or what is the same thing to me—philosophy without nickname. It now stands before me as a perfect whole, founded on itself—the pure conception of self-conscious reason,—the mirror of our better selves. Individual parts are still obscure to me, but they cannot now deprive me of my comprehension of the whole; and their number is every day diminishing. Beside it lie the ruins of the edifice which cost me so much time and labour, in which I thought to dwell so securely and commodiously, to entertain so many guests,—in which I laughed, not without self-gratulation, over so many Kantists who mistook the scaffolding for the house itself. This catastrophe would have caused me much pain for a time, if it had happened by the hand of scepticism." . . . . . .

"Adieu! I salute you with deepest gratitude. Is personal intercourse absolutely necessary to the growth of friendship? I doubt it. For indeed it is not mere gratitude, not mere reverence,—it is heartfelt love that I feel for you, since I now, through your philosophy, understand yourself."

In Fichte's literary correspondence from Zurich we find the first intimations of his departure from the system of Kant, and his plan of a complete and comprehensive philosophy. He could not rest satisfied with results alone, unless he could perceive the grounds on which they rested. His reason imperatively demanded absolute unity of conception, without separation, without division,—above all, without opposition. Writing to Niethammer in October 1793 he says—"My conviction is that Kant has only *indicated* the truth, but neither unfolded nor proved it. This singular man either has a power of divining truth, without being himself conscious of the grounds on which it rests; or he has not esteemed his age worthy of the communication of those grounds; or he has shrunk from attracting that superhuman reverence during his life, which sooner or later must be his in some degree." And as the great idea of his own system dawned upon his mind, he says to Stephani—"I have discovered a new principle, from which all philosophy can easily be deduced. . . . . . . In a couple of years we shall have a philosophy with all the clearness of geometrical evidence."—To the development of this scheme he now devoted all the energies of his powerful intellect. He refused an invitation to become tutor to the Prince of Mecklenberg-Strelitz:—"I desire," he says, "nothing but leisure to execute my plan,—then fortune may do with me what it will."

But his studies were soon broken in upon by a call of another and more important nature. This was his appointment as Professor *Supernumerarius* of Philosophy at the University of Jena, in room of Reinhold, who removed to Kiel. The distinguished honour of this invitation, unasked and unexpected as it was, and the extensive field of usefulness which it opened to him, determined Fichte at once to accept it. He endeavoured to obtain a postponement of the period for commencing his duties, which had been fixed for Easter 1794, in order that, by the more complete elaboration of the principle which he had discovered, he might be able to elevate his philosophy at once to the rank of a positive science. For this purpose he requested a year's delay. But as it was considered that the interest of the University would be prejudiced by the chair remaining so long vacant, his request was refused,—with permission, however, to devote the greater part of his time, during the first year, to study. He therefore sent an unconditional acceptance, and plunged at once into the most arduous preparations for his new duties.

Weimar and its neighbouring University was at this time the focus of German literature and learning. The Grand Duke Charles Augustus had gathered around him the most distinguished men of his age, and Wieland, Herder, Goethe, Schiller and Humboldt shed a more than Medicean lustre upon the little Saxon Court. Probably at no other time was so much high genius, engaged in every department of mental exertion, gathered together in one spot. The University, too, was the most numerously frequented of any in Germany, not by the youth of Saxony alone, but by students from almost every part of Europe: Switzerland, Denmark, Poland, Hungary, the free cities, and even France, sent their sons to Jena for education. The brilliant intellectual circle at Weimar presented to the cultivated mind attractions which could be found nowhere else, whilst at Jena the academic teacher found a most extensive and honourable field for the exercise of his powers. It was to this busy scene of mental activity that Fichte was called from his Swiss retreat,—to the society of the greatest living men,—to the instruction of this thronging crowd from all surrounding nations. Previous to his own appearance, he published as a programme of his lectures, the "Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre oder der Sogenannten Philosophie." His reputation, and the bold originality of his system, drew universal attention. Expectation was strained to the utmost; so that those who had marked the rapid growth of his fame, had great apparent reason to fear that it might prove short-lived. But notwithstanding the shortness of the time allowed him for preparation, he entered upon his course with a clear perception of the task that lay before him, and confident reliance on his own power to fulfil the duties to which he was called.

He arrived at Jena on the 18th of May 1794, and was received with great kindness by his colleagues at the University. On the 23d he delivered his first lecture. The largest hall in Jena, although crowded to the roof, proved insufficient to contain the audience. His singular and commanding address, his fervid, fiery eloquence, the rich profusion of his thoughts, following each other in the most convincing sequence and modelled with the sharpest precision, astonished and delighted his hearers. His triumph was complete;—he left the Hall the most popular Professor of the greatest University in Germany. The following acute and graphic remarks on this subject, from Forberg's "Fragmenten aus meinen Papieren," afford us some glimpse of the opinions entertained of him by his contemporaries at Jena:—

"*Jena*, 12*th May* 1794.

"I look with great confidence to Fichte, who is daily expected here. But I would have had still greater confidence in him if he had written the "Kritik der Offenbarung" twenty years later. A young man who ventures to write a masterpiece must commonly suffer for it. He is what he is, and he will not be what he might have been.

He has spent his strength too soon, and his later fruits will at least want ripeness. A great mind has no merit if it does not possess sufficient resignation *not to appear* great for a time, that thereby it may become greater. If a man cannot sacrifice a dozen years' fame as an offering to truth, what else can he lay upon her altar? I believe that Reinhold's theory has done much injury to the study of the Kantean philosophy, but that is nothing to the injury it has done to the author himself. His philosophy is finished for this world,—nothing more is to be expected from him but polemics and reminiscences. Fichte is not here yet,—but I am eager to know whether he has anything still to learn. It would be almost a wonder if he has, considering the incense that they burn before him. Oh! there is nothing so easily unlearned as the power of learning."

"*7th December* 1794.

" Since Reinhold has left us, his philosophy (with us at least) has expired. Every trace of the " Philosophy without nickname" has vanished from among the students. Fichte is believed in, as Reinhold never was believed in. They understand him indeed even less than they did his predecessor; but they believe all the more obstinately on that account. *Ego* and *Non-Ego* are now the symbols of the philosophers of yesterday, as *substance* and *form* were formerly.

" Fichte's philosophy is, so to speak, more philosophical than Reinhold's. You *hear* him going digging and seeking after truth. In rough masses he brings it forth from the deep, and throws it from him. He does not *say* what he will do; he *does* it. Reinhold's doctrine was rather an announcement of a philosophy, than a philosophy itself. He has never fulfilled his promises. Not unfrequently did he give forth the promise for the fulfilment. He never will fulfil them,—for he is now past away. Fichte seems really determined to work upon the world through his philosophy. The tendency to restless activity which dwells in the breast of every noble youth he would carefully nourish and cultivate, that it may in due season bring forth fruit. He seizes every opportunity of teaching that action, action, is the vocation of man; whereby it is only to be feared that the majority of young men who lay the maxim to heart, may look upon this summons to action as only a summons to demolition. And, strictly speaking, the principle is false. Man is not called upon to act, but to act justly; if he cannot act without acting unjustly, he should remain inactive. . . .

"Every reader of Kant or Fichte is seized by a deep feeling of the superiority of these mighty minds; who wrestle with their subjects, as it were, to grind them to powder; who seem to say all that they do say to us, only that we may conjecture how much more they could say.

"All the truth that J—— has written is not worth a tenth part of the false which Fichte may have written. The one gives me a small number of known truths; the other gives me perhaps one truth, but in doing so, opens before me the prospect of an infinity of unknown truths. . . . . .

"It is certain that in Fichte's philosophy there is quite a different spirit from that which pervades the philosophy of his predecessor. The spirit of the latter is a weak, fearful spirit, which timidly includes wide, narrow, and narrowest shades of meaning between the hedges and fences of a "to some extent"—and "in so far;" a weak, exhausted spirit, which conceals (and ill-conceals) its poverty of thought behind the mantle of scholastic phraseology, and whose philosophy is form without substance, a skeleton without flesh and blood, body without life, promise without fulfilment. But the spirit of Fichte's philosophy is a proud and bold spirit, for which the domain of human knowledge, even in its widest extent, is too narrow; which opens up new paths with every step it takes; which struggles with language in order to wrest from it words enough for its wealth of thought; which does not lead us, but seizes us and hurries us along, and whose finger cannot touch an object without bruising it to dust. But that which especially gives Fichte's philosophy quite another interest from that of Reinhold, is this,—that in all his inquiries there is a motion, a struggle, an effort, thoroughly to solve the hardest problems of reason. His predecessor never appeared to suspect the existence of these problems—to say nothing of their solution. Fichte's philosophemes are inquiries in which we see the truth before our eyes, and thus they produce knowledge and conviction. Reinhold's philosophemes are exhibitions of results, the production of which goes on behind the scenes. We may believe, but we cannot know! . . . . . .

"The fundamental element of Fichte's character is the highest honesty. Such a character commonly knows little of delicacy and refinement. In his writings we do not meet with much that is particularly beautiful; his best passages are always distinguished by greatness and strength. He does not say fine things, but all his words have force and weight. He wants the amiable, kind, attractive, accommodating spirit of Reinhold. His principles are severe, and not much softened by humanity. Nevertheless he suffers what Reinhold could not suffer—contradiction; and understands what Reinhold could not understand—a joke. His superiority is not felt to be so humiliating as that of Reinhold; but if he is called forth, he is terrible. His is a restless spirit, thirsting for opportunity to do great things in the world.

"Fichte's public delivery does not flow on smoothly, sweetly, and softly, as Reinhold's did; it rushes along like a tempest, discharging its fire in separate masses. He does not move the soul as Reinhold did—he rouses it. The one seemed as if he would make men good—the other would make them great. Reinhold's face was mildness, and his form was majesty; Fichte's eye is threatening, and his step daring and defiant. Reinhold's philosophy was an endless polemic against Kantists and Anti-Kantists; Fichte, with his, desires to lead the spirit of the age; he knows its weak side, and therefore he addresses it on the side of politics. He possesses more readiness, more acuteness, more penetration, more genius,—in short, more spiritual power than Reinhold. His fancy is not flowing, but it is energetic and mighty;—his pictures are not charming, but they are bold and massive. He penetrates to the innermost depths of his subject, and moves about in the ideal world with an ease and confidence which proclaim that he not only dwells in that invisible land, but rules there."*

Doubts were entertained, even before Fichte's arrival at Jena, that his ardent and active spirit might lead him to use the influence he should acquire over the students for the furtherance of political projects. His supposed democratic opinions were even made a ground of objection to his appointment. And it cannot be affirmed that such anticipations were improbable; for certainly the tendency of his own character, and the peculiar circumstances of the age, presented strong temptations to convert the chair of the professor into the pulpit of the practical philanthropist. He himself says that he was assailed by not a few such temptations, and even invitations, at the beginning of his residence at Jena, but that he resolutely cast them from him. He was not one of those utilitarian philosophers, who willingly sacrifice high and enduring good to the attainment of some partial and temporary purpose. His idea of the vocation of an academical teacher (set forth at large in the ninth lecture of the present volume), opened to him another field of duty, superior to that of direct political activity. In all his intercourse with his pupils, public or private, his sole object was the development and cultivation of their moral and intellectual powers. No trace can be found of any attempt to lead his hearers upon the stage of actual life, while the opposition between the speculative and practical sides of their nature still existed. To reconcile this opposition was the great object of his philosophy. In his hands philosophy was no longer speculation, but knowledge—(it was soon divested even of its scholastic terminology, and the *Ego, Non-Ego,* &c. entirely laid aside),—the expression of the profoundest thoughts of man on himself, the world, and God;—while, on the other hand, morality was no preceptive legislation, but the natural development of the active principle of our own being, indissolubly bound up with, and indeed the essential root of, its intellectual aspect. Binding together into a common unity every mode and manifestation of our nature, his philosophy is capable of the widest application, and of an almost infinite variety of expression; while in the ceaseless elevation of our *whole* being to higher grades of nobility and greatness, is found at once its intellectual supremacy and its moral power.

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* The following graphic sketch of Fichte's personal appearance and manner of delivery, is taken from the Autobiography of Henry Steffens. Although it refers to a later period of his life, it is thought most appropriate to introduce it here:—

"Fichte appeared, to deliver his introductory lecture on the Destination of Man. This short, strong-built man, with sharp commanding features, made, I must confess, a most imposing appearance, as I then saw him for the first time. Even his language had a cutting sharpness. Well acquainted with the metaphysical incapacity of his hearers, he took the greatest possible pains fully to demonstrate his propositions; but there was an air of authoritativeness in his discourse, as if he would remove all doubts by mere word of command. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'collect yourselves—go into yourselves—for we have here nothing to do with things without, but simply with the inner self.' Thus summoned, the auditors appeared really to go into themselves. Some, to facilitate the operation, changed their position, and stood up; some drew themselves together, and cast their eyes upon the floor: all were evidently waiting under high excitement for what was to follow this preparatory summons. 'Gentlemen,' continued Fichte, 'think the wall'—*(Denken Sie die Wand.)* This was a task to which the hearers were evidently all equal; they thought the wall. 'Have you thought the wall?' asked Fichte. 'Well then, gentlemen, think him who thought the wall.' It was curious to see the evident confusion and embarrassment that now arose. Many of his audience seemed to be utterly unable anywhere to find him who had thought the wall.—Fichte's delivery was excellent, being marked throughout by clearness and precision."

So far indeed was Fichte from lending his countenance to political combination among the students, or inculcating any sentiments subversive of the existing arrangements of society,—that no one suffered more than he did, from the clergy on the one hand, and the students on the other, in the attempt to maintain good order in the University. The unions known by the name of *Landsmannschaften* existed at that time in the German schools of learning as they do now, but their proceedings were then marked by much greater turbulence and licence than they are at the present day. Riots of the most violent description were of common occurrence; houses were broken into and robbed of their contents to supply the marauders with the means of sensual indulgence. The arm of the law was impotent to restrain these excesses; and so bold had the unionists become, that upon one occasion, when the house of a professor had been ransacked, five hundred students openly demanded from the Duke an amnesty for the offence. Efforts had been made at various times, by the academical authorities, to suppress these societies, but the students only broke out into more frightful excesses when any attempt was made to restrain their "Burschen-rights," or "Academical freedom." In the hope of effecting some reformation of manners in the University, Fichte commenced, soon after his arrival at Jena, a course of *public* lectures on academical morality. Some of these were afterwards published under the title of "Lectures on the destiny of the Scholar." These lectures, and his own personal influence among the students, were attended with the happiest effects. The three *orders* which then existed at Jena expressed their willingness to dissolve their union, on condition of the past being forgotten. They delivered over to Fichte the books and papers of their society, for the purpose of being destroyed as soon as he could make their peace with the Court at Weimar, and receive a commission to administer to them the oath of renunciation, which they would receive from no one but himself. After some delay, caused in part by the authorities of the University, who seem to have been jealous of the success with which an individual professor had accomplished, without assistance, what they had in vain endeavoured to effect by threatenings and punishment, the desired arrangements were effected, and the commission arrived. But in consequence of some doubts to which this delay had given rise, one of the three orders drew back from the engagement, and turned with great virulence against Fichte, whom they suspected of deceiving them.

Encouraged, however, by the success which had attended his efforts with the other two orders, Fichte determined to pursue the same course during the winter session of 1794, and to deliver another series of public lectures, calculated to rouse and sustain a spirit of honour and morality among the students. Thoroughly to accomplish his purpose, it was necessary that these lectures should take place at an hour not devoted to any other course, so that he might assemble an audience from among all the different classes. But he found that every hour from 8 A.M. till 7 P.M. was already occupied by lectures on important branches of knowledge. No way seemed open to him but to deliver his moral discourses on Sundays. Before adopting this plan, however, he made diligent inquiries whether any law, either of the State or of the University, forbade such a proceeding. Discovering no such prohibition, he examined into the practice of other Universities, and found many precedents to justify Sunday-lectures —particularly a course of a similar nature delivered by Gellert at Berlin. He finally asked the opinion of some of the oldest professors, none of whom could see any objection to his proposal, provided he did not encroach upon the time devoted to divine service;—Schütz remarking, "If plays are allowed on Sunday, why not moral lectures?" The hour of divine service in the University was 11 A.M. Fichte therefore fixed upon nine in the morning as his hour of lecture, and commenced his course with most favourable prospects. A large concourse of students from all the different classes thronged his hall, and several of the professors, who took their places among the audience, willingly acknowledged the benefit which they derived from his discourses. But he soon discovered that the best intentions and the most prudent conduct are no protection against calumny. A political print, which had attained an unenviable notoriety for anonymous slander, and had distinguished itself by crawling sycophancy towards power, now exhibited its far-seeing sagacity by tracing the intimate connection between the Sunday-lectures and the French Revolution, and proclaimed the former to be a "formal attempt to overturn the public religious services of Christianity, and to erect the worship of Reason in their stead"! Strange to tell, the Consistory of Jena saw it to be their duty to forward a complaint on this subject to the High-Consistory at Weimar; and finally an assembly in which a Herder sat, lodged an accusation before the Duke and Privy-council against Professor Fichte for "a deliberate attempt against the public religious services of the country." Fichte was directed to suspend his lectures in the meantime, until inquiry could be made. He immediately met the accusation with a powerful defence, in which he indignantly hurls back the charge, completely demolishing by a simple narrative of the real facts every vestige of argument by which it could be supported; and takes occasion to make the Government acquainted with his projects for the moral improvement of the students. The judgment of the Duke is dated 25th January 1795, and by it, Fichte "is freely acquitted of the utterly groundless suspicion which had been attached to him," and confidence is expressed, "that in his future proceedings he will exhibit such wisdom and prudence as shall entitle him to the continued good opinion" of the Prince. Permission was given him to resume his Sunday-lectures, avoiding the hours of divine service.

But in the meantime the outrageous proceedings of the party of the students which was opposed to him, rendered it impossible for him to entertain any hope of conciliating them, and soon made his residence at Jena uncomfortable and even dangerous. His wife was insulted upon the public street, and both his person and property subjected to repeated outrages. He applied to the Senate of the University for protection, but was informed that the treatment he had received was the result of his interference in the affairs of the Orders upon the authority of the State, and without the coöperation of the Senate; that they could do nothing more than *authorize* self-defence in case of necessity; and that if he desired more protection than the Academy could give him, he might apply to his friends at Court. At last, when at the termination of the winter session an attack was made upon his house in the middle of the night, in which his venerable father-in-law narrowly escaped with life, Fichte applied to the Duke for permission to leave Jena. This was granted, and he took up his residence during the summer at the village of Osmanstadt, about two miles from Weimar.

In delightful contrast to the stormy character of his public life at this time, stands the peaceful simplicity of his domestic relations. In consequence of the suddenness of his removal from Zurich, his wife did not accompany him at the time, but joined him a few months afterwards. And her venerable father, too, had been persuaded by his love for his children, to leave his native land and take up his residence with them at Jena. This excellent old man was the object of Fichte's deepest respect and attachment, and his declining years were watched with all the anxiety of filial tenderness. He died on the 29th of September 1795, at the age of 76. His remains were accompanied to the grave by Fichte's pupils as a mark of respect for their teacher's grief, and a simple monument records the affectionate reverence of those he left behind him. In pure and unbroken attachment, Fichte and his wife partook the calm joys of domestic felicity, and at a later period the smile of childhood added a new charm to their home. A son who was born at Jena was their only child.*

Fichte's intercourse with the eminent men who adorned this brilliant period of German literary history, was extensive and important. Preëminent among these stands Goethe, in many respects a remarkable contrast to the philosopher. The one, calm, sarcastic, and oracular; the other, restless, enthusiastic, impetuously eloquent;—the one, looking on men only to scan and comprehend them; the other, waging ceaseless war with their vices, their ignorance, their unworthiness;—the one, seating himself on a chilling elevation above human sympathy, and even exerting all the energies of his mighty intellect to veil the traces of every feeling which bound him to his fellow-men; the other, from an eminence no less exalted, pouring around him a rushing tide of moral power over his friends, his country, and the world. To the one, men looked up with a painful and hopeless sense of inferiority; they crowded around the other to participate in his wisdom, and to grow strong in gazing on his Titanic might. And even now when a common destiny has laid the proud gray column in the dust, and stayed the giant's arm from working, we look upon the majesty of the one with astonishment rather than reverence, while at the memory of the other the pulse of hope beats more vigorously than before, and the tear of patriotism falls heavily on his grave.

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* Now Professor of Philosophy in the University of Tubingen.

Goethe welcomed the Wissenschaftslehre with his usual avidity for new acquisitions. The bold attempt to infuse a living spirit into philosophical formulas, and give reality to speculative abstractions, roused his attention. He requested that it might be sent to him, sheet by sheet, as it went through the press. This was accordingly done, and the following passage from a letter to Fichte will show that he was not disappointed in the expectations he had formed of it:—

"What you have sent me contains nothing which I do not understand, or at least believe that I understand;—nothing that does not readily harmonize with my accustomed way of thinking; and I see the hopes which I had derived from the introduction already fulfilled.

"In my opinion you will confer a priceless benefit on the human race, and make every thinking man your debtor, by giving a scientific foundation to that upon which nature seems long ago to have quietly agreed with herself. For myself, I shall owe you my best thanks if you reconcile me to the philosophers, whom I cannot do without, and with whom, notwithstanding, I never could unite.

"I look with anxiety for the continuation of your work to adjust and confirm many things for me, and I hope, when you are free from urgent engagements, to speak with you about several matters, the prosecution of which I defer until I clearly understand how that which I hope to accomplish may harmonize with what we have to expect from you."

The personal intercourse of these two great men seems to have been characterized by mutual respect and esteem, without any approach to intimacy. Of one interview Fichte says—"He was politeness, friendship itself; he showed me unusual attention." But no correspondence was maintained between them after Fichte left Jena, in consequence of the proceedings which led to his departure.

Of a more enduring nature was his intimacy with Jacobi. It commenced in a literary correspondence soon after his arrival at Jena. Entertaining a deep respect for this distinguished man, derived solely from the study of his works, Fichte sent him a copy of the Wissenschaftslehre, with a request that he would communicate his opinion of the system it contained. In a long and interesting correspondence, extending over many years, the points of opposition between them were canvassed; and although a radical difference in mental constitution prevented them from ever thinking altogether alike, yet it did not prevent them from cultivating a warm and steadfast friendship, which continued unbroken amid vicissitudes by which other attachments were sorely tried.

Fichte had formed an acquaintance with Schiller at Tubingen when on his journey to Jena. Schiller's enthusiastic nature assimilated more closely to that of Fichte than did the dispositions of the other great poet of Germany, and a cordial intimacy sprang up between them. Fichte was a contributor to the *Horen* from its commencement—a journal which Schiller began soon after Fichte's arrival at Jena. This gave rise to a singular but short-lived misunderstanding between them. A paper entitled "Briefe über Geist und Buchstaben in der Philosophie" had been sent by Fichte for insertion in the Horen. Judging from the commencement alone, Schiller conceived it to be an imitation, or still worse, a parody, of his "Briefe über die Æsthetische Erziehung des Menschen," and, easily excited as he was, demanded with some bitterness that it should be re-written. Fichte did not justify himself by producing the continuation of the article, but referred the accusation of parody to the arbitration of Goethe and Humboldt. Schiller was convinced of his error, and soon apologized for it, but Fichte did not return the essay, and it appeared afterwards in the Philosophical Journal. After this slight misunderstanding they continued upon terms of confidence and friendship, and, towards the close of his life, Schiller became a zealous student of the Wissenschaftslehre.

Fichte likewise carried on an extensive correspondence with Reinhold (who has already been mentioned), Schelling, W. von Humboldt, Schaumann, Paulus, Schmidt, the Schlegels, Novalis, Tieck, Woltmann, besides a host of minor writers, so that his influence extended throughout the whole literary world of Germany at that period.

Fichte has been accused of asperity and superciliousness towards his literary opponents. It may easily be conceived that, occupying a point of view altogether different from theirs, his philosophy should appear to him entirely untouched by objections to which they attached great weight. Nor is it surprising that he should choose rather to proceed with the development of his own system from his own principles, than to place himself in the mental position of other men, and combat their arguments upon their own grounds. Those very grounds were the essential cause of their difference. Those who could take their stand beside him, would see the matter as he saw it; those who could not do this, must remain where they were. Claiming for his system the certainty of mathematical demonstration—asserting that with him philosophy was no longer mere *speculation*, but had now become *knowledge*, he could not bend or accommodate himself or his doctrines to the prejudices of others;—they must come to him, not he to them. "My philosophy," he says, "is nothing to Herr Schmidt, from incapacity; his is nothing to me from insight. From this time forth I look upon all that Herr Schmidt may say, either directly or indirectly, about my philosophy, as something which, so far as I am concerned, has no meaning, and upon Herr Schmidt himself as a philosopher who, in relation to me, is non-existent." That in such disputes Fichte should express himself strongly is not surprising. Even if an excuse could not be found for it in the abuse and persecution with which he was constantly assailed, it might be expected from his very nature. He spoke strongly, because he thought and felt deeply. He was the servant of truth, and it was not for him to mince his language towards her opponents. But it is worthy of remark that on these occasions he was never the assailant. In answer to some of Reinhold's expostulations he writes thus: "You say that my tone touches and wounds persons who do not deserve it. That I sincerely regret. But they must deserve it in some degree, if they will not permit one to tell them honestly of the errors in which they wander, and are not willing to suffer a slight shame for the sake of great instruction. With him to whom truth is not above all other things,—above his own petty personality—the Wissenschaftslehre can have nothing to do. The *internal* reason of the tone which I adopt is this:—It fills me with scorn which I cannot describe, when I look on the present want of any truthfulness of vision, on the deep darkness, entanglement, and perversion, which now prevail. The *external* reason is this:—How have these men (the Kantists) treated me?—how do they continue to treat me?—There is nothing that I have less pleasure in than controversy. Why then can they not be at peace?—For example, friend Schmidt? I have indeed not handled him tenderly;—but every just person who knew much that is not before the public, would give me credit for the mildness of an angel." *

The true nature of Fichte's controversialism is well exhibited in a short correspondence with Jakob, the Professor of Philosophy at Halle. Jakob was editor of the "Annalen der Philosophie," the chief organ of the Kantists—a journal which had distinguished itself by the most uncompromising attacks upon the Wissenschaftslehre. Fichte had replied in the Philosophical Journal in his usual style. Sometime afterwards Jakob, who was personally unknown to Fichte. addressed a letter to him, full of the most noble and generous sentiments, desiring that, although opposed to each other in principle, all animosity between them might cease. The following passages are extracted from Fichte's reply:—

Fichte to Jakob.

"I have never hated you, nor believed that you hated me. It may sound presumptuous, but it is true,—that I do not know properly what hate is, for I have never hated any one. And I am by no means so passionate as I am commonly said to be. . . . . That my Wissenschaftslehre was not understood,—that it is even now not understood (for it is supposed that I now teach *other* doctrines), I freely believe;—that it was not understood, on account of my mode of propounding it, in a book which was not designed for the public but for my own students; that no trust was reposed in me, but that I was looked upon as a babbler whose interference in the affairs of philosophy might do hurt to science; that it was *therefore* concluded that the system which men *knew* well enough that they did not understand, was a worthless system,—all this I know and can comprehend. But it is surely to be expected from every scholar—not that he should understand everything,—but that he should at least know whether he does understand a subject or not; and of every honest man, that he should not pass judgment on anything before he is conscious of understanding it. . . . . . . Dear Jakob! I have unlimited reverence for openness and uprightness of character. I had heard a high character of you, and I would never have suffered myself to pronounce such a judgment on your literary merit, had I not been afterwards led to entertain an opposite impression. Now, however, by the impartiality of your judgment upon me—by the warm interest you take in me as a member of the republic of letters,*—by your open testimony in my behalf, you have completely won my personal esteem. It shall not be my fault—(allow me to say this without offence)—if you do not also possess my entire esteem as an author, publicly expressed. I have shown B—— and E—— that I can do justice even to an antagonist.

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* The following amusing passage, from the commencement of an anonymous publication on this controversy, may serve to show the kind of reputation which Fichte had acquired among his opponents:—

"After the anathemas which the dreadful Fichte has hurled from the height of his philosophic throne upon the ant-hills of the Kantists; looking at the stigma for-ever branded on the foreheads of these unhappy creatures, which must compel them to hide their existence from the eye of an astonished public; amid the general fear and trembling which, spreading over all philosophic sects, casts them to the earth before the thunder-tread of this destroying god,—*who dare now avow himself a Kantist?* I dare—one of the most insignificant creatures ever dropped from the hand of fate. In the deep darkness which surrounds me, and which hides me from every eye in Germany—even from the eagle-glance of a Fichte; from this quiet retreat, every attempt to break in upon the security of which is ridiculous in the extreme,—from here I may venture to raise my voice, and cry, *I am a Kantist!*—and to Fichte—Thou *canst* err, and thou *hast* erred," &c. &c.

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* Jakob had espoused his cause in an important dispute, of which we shall soon have to treat.

Jakob's reply is that of a generous opponent:—

"Your answer, much esteemed Professor, has been most acceptable to me. In it I have found the man whom I wished to find. The differences between us shall be erased from our memory. Not a word of satisfaction to me. If anything that I do or write shall have the good fortune to meet your free and unpurchased approbation, and you find it good to communicate your opinion to the public, it will be gratifying to me;—for what joy have people of our kind in public life, that is not connected with the approbation of estimable men? But I shall accept your candid refutation as an equally sure mark of your esteem, and joyfully profit by it. Confutation without bitterness is never unacceptable to me."

Gradually disengaging himself from outward causes of disturbance, Fichte now sought to devote himself more exclusively to literary exertion, in order to embody his philosophy in a more enduring form than that of oral discourses. In 1795 he became joint-editor of the Philosophical Journal, which had for some years been conducted by his friend and colleague Niethammer. His contributions to it form a most important part of his works, and are devoted to the scientific development of his system. In 1796 appeared his "Doctrine of Law," and in 1798 his "Doctrine of Morals," —separate parts of the application which he purposed to make of the fundamental principles of the Wissenschaftslehre to the complete circle of knowledge. But this period of literary tranquillity was destined to be of short duration, for a storm soon burst upon him more violent than any he had hitherto encountered, which once more drove him for a long time from the path of peaceful inquiry into the angry field of polemical discussion.

Atheism is a charge which the common understanding has repeatedly brought against the finer speculations of philosophy, when, in endeavouring to solve the riddle of existence, they have approached, albeit with reverence and humility, the Ineffable Source from which all existence proceeds. Shrouded from human comprehension in an obscurity from which chastened imagination is awed back, and thought retreats in conscious weakness,—the Divine Nature is surely a theme on which man is little entitled to dogmatize. Accordingly, it is here that the philosophic intellect becomes most painfully aware of its own insufficiency. It feels that silence is the most fitting attitude of the finite being towards its Infinite and Incomprehensible Original, and that when it is needful that thought should shape itself into words, they should be those of diffidence and modest self-distrust. But the common understanding has no such humility;—its God in an Incarnate Divinity;—imperfection imposes its own limitations on the Illimitable, and clothes the inconceivable Spirit of the Universe in sensuous and intelligible forms derived from finite nature. In the world's childhood—when the monstrous forms of earth were looked upon as the visible manifestations of Deity, or the viewless essences of nature were imagined to contain his presence;—in the world's youth—when stream and forest, hill and valley, earth and ocean, were peopled with divinities, graceful or grotesque, kind or malevolent, pure or polluted;—in the world's ages of toil—when the crushed soul of the slave looked to his God for human sympathy, and sometimes fancied that he encountered worse than human oppression;—in all ages, men have coloured the brightness of Infinity with hues derived from their own hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, virtues and crimes. And he who felt that the Eidolon of the age was an inadequate representative of his own deeper thoughts of God, had need to place his hopes of justice in futurity, and make up his mind to be despised and rejected by the men of his own day. Socrates drank the poisoned cup because his conceptions of divine things surpassed the mythology of Greece; Christ endured the cross at the hands of the Jews for having told them the truth which he had heard from the Father; Paul suffered persecution, indignity, and death, for he was a setter forth of strange Gods. Modern times have not been without their martyrs. Descartes died in a foreign land for his bold thought and open speech; Spinoza—the brave, kind-hearted, incorruptible Spinoza—was the object both of Jewish and Christian anathema. From our own land Priestley was banished by popular fanaticism, and in our own days legalized bigotry tore asunder the sacred bonds which united one of the purest and most sensitive of living beings to his offspring—the gentle, imaginative, *deeply-religious* Shelley was an "atheist!" And so, too, Fichte—whose ardent love of freedom made him an object of distrust and fear to timorous statesmen, and whose daring speculations struck dismay into the souls of creed-bound theologians—found himself assailed at once by religious and political persecution. But in him tyranny once more found a man who had the courage to oppose himself, alone and unfriended, against its hate, and whose stedfast devotion to truth remained unshaken amid all the dangers and difficulties which gathered round his way.

Fichte's theory of God has already been spoken of in a general way. It was the necessary result of his speculative position. The consciousness of the individual reveals *itself* alone; his knowledge cannot pass beyond the limits of his own being. His conceptions of other things and other beings are only *his* conceptions,—they are not those things or beings themselves. From this point of view the common logical arguments for the existence of God, and in particular what is called the "argument from design" supposed to exist in the material world, entirely disappears. Only from our idea of duty, and our faith in the inevitable consequences of moral action, arises the belief in a principle of moral order in the world;—and this principle is God. But this living principle of a living universe must be infinite; while all our ideas and conceptions are finite, and applicable only to finite beings, not to the Infinite. Even consciousness and personality are the attributes of relative and limited beings; and to apply these to God is to bring Him down to the rank of relative and limited being. The Deity is thus not an object of knowledge but of faith,—not to be approached by the understanding, but by the moral sense—not to be conceived of, but to be felt. All attempts to embrace the infinite in the conception of the finite are, and must be, only accommodations to the frailties of man.

The Philosophical Journal for 1798 contained an essay by Forberg "On the definition of the Idea of Religion." Fichte found the principles of this essay not so much opposed to his own, as only imperfect in themselves, and deemed it necessary to prefix to it a paper "On the grounds of our faith in a Divine Government of the world." In this article, after pointing out the imperfections and merely human qualities which are attributed to the Deity in the common conceptions of His being, and which necessarily flow from the "cause and effect" argument in its ordinary applications, he proceeds to state the true grounds of our faith in a moral government or moral order in the universe,—not for the purpose of *inducing* faith by proof, but to show the springs of a faith already present in man, and indestructibly rooted in his nature. The business of philosophy is not to create but to explain; the faith in the divine exists without the aid of philosophy,—it is hers only to investigate its origin, not for the conversion of the infidel, but to explain the conviction of the believer. The sources from which he draws that faith have been noticed already in a previous part of this memoir, and need not be repeated here. The general results of the essay may be gathered from the concluding passage:—

"Hence it is an error to say that it is doubtful whether or not there is a God. It is not doubtful, but the most certain of all certainties,—nay, the foundation of all other certainties—the one absolutely valid objective truth,—that there is a moral order in the world; that to every rational being is assigned his particular place in that order, and the work which he has to do; that his destiny, in so far as it is not occasioned by his own conduct, is the result of this plan; that in no other way can even a hair fall from his head, nor a sparrow fall to the ground around him; that every true and good action prospers, and every bad action fails; and that all things must work together for good to those who truly love goodness. On the other hand, no one who reflects a moment, and honestly avows the result of his reflection, can remain in doubt that the conception of God as *a particular substance* is impossible and contradictory: and it is right candidly to say this, and to silence the babbling of the schools, in order that the true religion of cheerful virtue may be established in its room.

"Two great poets have expressed this faith of good and thinking men with inimitable beauty. Such an one may adopt their language:—

" 'Who dares to say,
" I believe in God"?
Who dares to name him—[*seek ideas and words for him.*]
And to profess,
" I believe in him"?
Who can feel,
And yet affirm,
" I believe him not"?
The All-Embracer,—[*when he is approached through the moral sense, not through theoretical speculation, and the world is looked upon as the scene of living moral activity.*]
The All-Sustainer,
Does he not embrace, support,
Thee, me, himself?
Does not the vault of heaven arch o'er us there?
Does not the earth lie firmly here below?
And do not the eternal stars
Rise on us with their friendly beams?
Do not I see my image in thine eyes?
And does not the All
Press on thy head and heart,
And weave itself around thee, visibly and invisibly,
In eternal mystery?

Fill thy heart with it till it overflow;
And in the feeling, when thou 'rt wholly blest,
Then call it what thou wilt,—
Happiness! Heart! Love! God!
I have no name for it:
Feeling is all; name is but sound and smoke,
Veiling the glow of heaven.'*

" And the second sings—

" 'And God is!—a holy Will that abides,
  Though the human will may falter;
High over both Space and Time it rides,
  The high Thought that will never alter:
And while all things in change eternal roll,
It endures, through change, a motionless soul.' "†

The publication of this essay furnished a welcome opportunity to those Princes, to whom Fichte was obnoxious on account of his democratic opinions, to institute public proceedings against him. The note was sounded by the publication of an anonymous pamphlet, entitled " Letters of a Father to his Son on the Atheism of Fichte and Forberg," which was industriously and even *gratuitously* circulated throughout Germany. The first official proceeding was a decree of the Electoral Government, prohibiting the sale of the Philosophical Journal, and confiscating all copies of it found in the electorate. This was followed up by a requisition addressed to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, as the Conservator of the University of Jena, in which Fichte and Forberg were accused of " the coarsest atheism, openly opposed not only to the Christian, but even to natural, religion;"—and their severe punishment was demanded; failing which, it was threatened that the subjects of the Elector should be prohibited from resorting to the University. These proceedings were imitated by the other Protestant Courts of Germany, that of Prussia excepted.

In answer to the official condemnation of his essay, Fichte sent forth his "Appeal to the Public against the accusation of Atheism," Jena 1799;—in which, with his accustomed boldness, he does not confine himself to the strict limits of self-defence, but exposes with no lenient hand the true cause which rendered him obnoxious to the Electoral Government,—not the atheism of which he was so absurdly accused, but the spirit of freedom and independence which his philosophy inculcated. He did not desire, he would not accept of any compromise;—he demanded a free acquittal, or a public condemnation. He adopted the same high tone in his defence before his own Government. The Court of Weimar had no desire to restrain the liberty of thought, or to erect any barrier against free speculation. It was too wise not to perceive that a Protestant University in which secular power should dare to invade the precincts of philosophy or profane the highest sanctuaries of thought, however great its reputation for the moment, must infallibly sink from being a temple of knowledge into a warehouse for the sale of literary, medical or theological merchandise—a school-room for artizans—a drill-yard for hirelings. But, on the other hand, it was no part of the policy of the Court of Weimar to give offence to its more powerful neighbours, or to enter upon a crusade in defence of opinions obnoxious to the masses, because unintelligible to them. It was therefore intended to pass over this matter as smoothly as possible, and to satisfy the complaining governments by administering to Fichte a general rebuke for *imprudence* in promulgating his views in language liable to popular misconstruction. The appearance of his "Appeal to the Public," however, rendered this arrangement less easy of accomplishment. The opinion of the Government with respect to this publication was communicated to Fichte in a letter from Schiller,—"that there was no doubt that he had cleared himself of the accusation before every thinking mind; but that it was surprising that he had not consulted with higher quarters before he sent forth his appeal: why appeal to the public at all, when he had only to do with a favourable and enlightened Government?" The obvious answer to which was, that the "Appeal to the Public" was a reply to the *public* confiscation of his work, while the *private* accusation before his Prince was answered by a *private* defence. In that defence the Court found that the accused was determined to push the investigation as far as his accusers could desire,—that he demanded either an honourable and unreserved acquittal, or deposition from his office, as a false teacher. A further breach between the Court and Fichte was caused by a letter which, in the course of these proceedings, he addressed to a member of the Council—his private friend—in which he announced that a resignation of his professorship would be the result of any reproof on the part of the Government. This letter, addressed to an individual in his private capacity, was most unjustifiably placed among the official documents connected with the proceedings. Its tone, excusable perhaps in a private communication, seemed presumptuous and arrogant when addressed to the supreme authority—it was the haughty defiance of an equal, rather than the remonstrance of a subject. This abuse of a private letter—this betrayal of the confidence of friendship—cost Jena its most distinguished professor. On the 2d of April 1799, Fichte received the decision of the Ducal Court. It contained a reproof for imprudence in promulgating doctrines so unusual and so offensive to the common understanding, and accepted of Fichte's resignation as a recognized consequence of that reproof. It is to be regretted that the policy of the government and the faults of individuals prevented in this instance the formal recognition of the great principle involved in the contest, *i. e.* that civil governments have no right to restrain the expression of any theoretical opinion propounded in a scientific form and addressed to the scientific world.

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* Goethe's " Faust."

† The above stanza of Schiller's " Worte des Glaubens" is taken from Mr. Merivale's excellent translation.

In strong contrast to the feelings of the populace, stands the enthusiastic attachment evinced towards Fichte by the students. Two numerously signed petitions were presented to the Duke, praying for his recall. These having proved unavailing, they caused a medallion of their beloved teacher to be struck, in testimony of their admiration and esteem.

Fichte's position was now one of the most difficult which can well be imagined. A prolonged residence at Jena was out of the question,—he could no longer remain there. But where to turn?—where to seek an asylum? No neighbouring state would afford him shelter; even the privilege of a private residence was refused. At length a friend appeared in the person of Dohm, Minister to the King of Prussia. Through him Fichte applied to Frederick-William for permission to reside in his dominions, with a view of earning a livelihood by literary exertion and private teaching. The answer of the Prussian monarch was worthy of his high character:—"If," said he, "Fichte is so peaceful a citizen, and so free from all dangerous associations as he is said to be, I willingly accord him a residence in my dominions. As to his religious principles, it is not for the state to decide upon them."*

Fichte arrived in Prussia in July 1799, and devoted the summer and autumn to the completion of his "Bestimmung des Menschen." Towards the end of the year he returned to Jena for the purpose of removing his family to Berlin, where, henceforward, he fixed his place of residence. The following extracts are from letters written to his wife during their temporary separation:—

Fichte an Seiner Frau.

"You probably wish to know how I live. For many reasons, the weightiest of which lie in myself and in my cough, I cannot keep up the early rising. Six o'clock is generally my earliest. I go then to my writing desk, so that I am not altogether idle, although I do not get on as I could wish. I am now working at the Bestimmung des Menschen. At half-past twelve I hold my toilet (yes!—get powdered, dressed, &c.), and at one I call on M. Veit, where I meet Schlegel and a reformed preacher, Schlegel's friend.* At three I come back, and read a French novel, or write, as I do now to you. If the piece is at all tolerable, which is not always the case, I go to the theatre at five. If it is not, I walk with Schlegel in the suburbs, in the zoological gardens, or under the linden trees before the house. Sometimes I make small country parties with Schlegel and his friends. So we did, for example, the day before yesterday, with the most lively remembrance of thee and the little one. We had no wine to drink your health,—only sour beer, and a slice of black bitter bread with a thin bit of half-decayed ham stuck upon it with dirty butter. Politeness makes me put up with many things here which are scarcely tolerable. But I have thought of a better method for country parties.

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* The original phraseology of this last passage is peculiarly characteristic:—"Ist es wahr, dass er mit dem lieben Gotte in Feindseligkeiten begriffen ist; so mag dies der liebe Gott mit ihm abmachen; mir thut das nichts."

"In the evening I sup on a roll of bread and a quart of Medoc wine, which are the only tolerable things in the house; and go to bed between ten and eleven, to sleep without dreaming. Only once—it was after thy first alarming letter—I had my Hermann in my arms, full of joy that he was well again, when suddenly he stretched himself out, turned pale, and all those appearances followed which are indelibly imprinted on my memory.

"I charge thee, dearest, with thy own health and the health of the little one.—Farewell."

* * * * * *

"I am perfectly secure here. Yesterday I visited the Cabinet Councillor Beyme, who is daily engaged with the King, and spoke to him about my position. I told him honestly that I had come here in order to take up my abode, and that I sought for safety because it was my intention that my family should follow me. He assured me, that far from there being any desire to hinder me in this purpose, it would be esteemed an honour and advantage if I made my residence here,—that the King was immovable upon certain principles affecting these questions, &c."

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* Schleiermacher.

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"I work with industry and pleasure. My work on the 'Destiny of Man' will, I think, be ready at Michaelmas—written, not printed,—and it seems to me likely to succeed. You know that I am never satisfied with my works when they are first written, and therefore that my own opinion on this point is worth something. . . . . . By my residence in Berlin I have gained this much, *that I shall henceforth be allowed to live in peace elsewhere;*—and this is much. I venture to say that I should have been teazed and perhaps hunted out of any other place. But it is quite another thing now that I have lived in Berlin under the eye of the King. By and by I think even the Weimar Court will learn to be ashamed of its conduct, especially if I make no advances to it. In the meantime something advantageous may happen. So be thou calm and of good courage, dear one, and trust in thy Fichte's judgment, talent, and good fortune. Thou laughst at the last word. Well, well!—I assure you that good fortune will soon come back again."

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"I have written to Reinhold a cold, somewhat upbraiding letter. The good weak soul is full of lamentations. I shall immediately comfort him again, and take care that he is not alienated from me in future. If I was beside thee, thou wouldst say—'Dost thou hear, Fichte? thou art proud—I must tell it thee, if no one else can.' Very well, be thou glad that I am proud. Since I have no humility, I must be proud, so that I may have something to carry me through the world."

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"Of all that thou writest to me, I am most dissatisfied with this, that thou callest our Hermann an ill-bred boy. No greater misfortune could befall me on earth than that this child should be spoiled; and I would lament my absence from Jena only if it should be the cause of that. I adjure thee by thy maternal duties, by thy love to me, by all that is holy to thee, let this child be thy first and only care, and leave everything else for him. Thou art deficient in firmness and coolness;—hence all thy errors in the education of the little one. Teach him that when thou hast once denied him anything, it is determined and irrevocable, and that neither petulance nor the most urgent entreaties will be of any avail:—once fail in this, and you have an ill-taught obstinate boy, particularly with the natural disposition to strength of character which our little one possesses; and it costs a hundred times more labour to set him right again. For indeed it should be our first care, not to let his character be spoiled;—and believe me, there is in him the capacity of being a wild knave, as well as that of being an honest, true, virtuous man. In particular, do not suppose that he will be led by persuasion and reasoning. The most intelligent men err in this, and thou also in the same way. He cannot think for himself yet, nor will he be able to do so for a long time;—at present, the first thing is that he should learn obedience and subjection to a foreign mind. Thou mayst indeed sometimes gain thy immediate purpose by persuasion, not because he understands thy reasons and is moved by them, but because thou in a manner submittest thyself to him and makest him the judge. Thus his pride is flattered; thy talk employs his vacant time and dispels his caprices. But this is all;—while for the future thou renderest his guidance more difficult for thee, and confirmest thyself in a pernicious prejudice."

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"Cheerfulness and good courage are to me the highest proof that thou lovest me as I should be loved. Dejection and sorrow are distrust in me, and make me unhappy because they make thee unhappy. It is no proof of love that thou shouldst feel deeply the injustice done to me: to me it is a light matter, and so must it be to thee, for thou and I are one.

"Do not speak of dying; indulge in no such thoughts; for they weaken thee, and thus might become true. No! we will yet live with each other many joyful and happy days; and our child shall close our eyes when he is a mature and perfect man: till then he needs us.

"In the progress of my present work, I have taken a deeper glance into religion than ever I did before. In me the emotions of the heart proceed only from perfect intellectual clearness:—it cannot be but that the clearness I have now attained on this subject shall also take possession of my heart.

"Believe me, that to this disposition is to be ascribed, in a great measure, my stedfast cheerfulness and the mildness with which I look upon the injustice of my opponents. I do not believe that, without this dispute and its evil consequences, I should ever have come to this clear insight and this disposition of heart which I now enjoy; and so the violence we have experienced has had a result which neither you nor I can regret.

"Comfort the poor boy, and dry thy tears as he bids thee. Think that it is his father's advice, who indeed would say the same thing. And do with our dear Hermann as I wrote thee before. The child is our riches, and we must use him well."

If the spectacle of the scholar contending against the hindrances of fortune and the imperfections of his own nature—struggling with the common passions of mankind and the weakness of his own will—soaring aloft amid the highest speculations of genius, and dragged down again to earth by its coarsest attractions;—if this is one of the most painful spectacles which the theatre of life presents, surely one of the noblest is when we see such a man pursuing some lofty theme with a constancy which difficulties cannot shake, nor the whirlwind of passion destroy. Nor is the scene less interesting and instructive, if the inherent nobility of its central figure has drawn around him a few souls of kindred nobleness, whose presence sheds a genial brilliance over a path otherwise solitary, although never dark or doubtful:—Such was now Fichte's position. The first years of his residence at Berlin were among the most peaceful in his life of vicissitude and storm. Uninterrupted by public duties, he now applied his whole powers to the perfecting of his philosophy, surrounded by a small circle of friends worthy of his attachment and esteem. Friedrich and Wilhelm Schlegel, Tieck, Woltmann, Reichhardt and Friedrich Richter, were among his chosen associates; Bernhardi, with his clear and acute yet discursive thought, his social graces and warm affections, was his almost daily companion. Hufeland, the king's physician, whom he had known at Jena, now became bound to him by the closest ties, and rendered him many kind offices, over which the delicacy of friendship has thrown a veil. Amid the amenities of such society, and withdrawn from the anxieties and disturbances of public life, Fichte now devoted himself to the development and completion of his philosophic theory. It was during this period of repose that the great characteristic idea of his system first revealed itself to his mind in perfect fulness, and impressed upon his subsequent writings that deeply religious character to which we have formerly adverted. The passage from the circle of subjective reflection to objective and absolute being, which Kant had left unattempted, had hitherto, as we have already seen, been rested by Fichte on the ground of moral feeling only. Our faith in the Divine was the inevitable result of our faith in Duty; it was the imperative demand of our moral nature. But his thoughts were now directed more steadily to the religious aspect of his theory, and he sought to add an intellectual validity to this moral conviction, by a deeper analysis of the fact of consciousness. What is the essential character of our knowledge? It is this:—that it announces itself as a representation of something else, the picture of something superior to and independent of itself. It is thus composed of a double idea:—a higher being which it imperfectly represents; and itself,—inferior to, derived from, and dependent upon the first. Thus it must renounce the thought of itself as the only being whose existence it reveals, and regard itself rather as the image or reflection of a truly Highest and Ultimate Being revealed in human thought, and indeed its essential foundation. And this idea cannot be got rid of on the ground that it is a merely subjective conception; for we have here reached the primitive essence of thought itself,—and to deny this would be to deny the very nature and conditions of our knowledge, and to maintain an obvious contradiction;—this, namely,—that there can be a conception without an object conceived, a manifestation without substance, and that the ultimate foundation of all things is *nothing*. By this reconciliation, and indeed essential union of the subjective with the objective, reason has finally bridged over the chasm by which analysis had formerly separated it from the simple faith of common humanity. Consciousness becomes the manifestation—the self-revelation of the absolute—*and this only*. The varied forms into which it is broken up, are only more or less perfect modes of this *one* Existence, and the idea of the world as an infinite assemblage of concrete beings, or of coöperative forces, conscious or unconscious, is another phase of the same infinite and absolute Being. But in no case, and from no point of view, is consciousness a purely subjective and empty train of fancies; it contains nothing which does not rest upon and image forth a higher reality; and thus Idealism assumes the form of a sublime and perfected Realism.

This change in the spirit of his philosophy has been ascribed to the influence of a distinguished contemporary, who now (1845) fills the chair at Berlin of which Fichte was the first occupant. It seems to us that it was the natural and inevitable result of his own principles and mode of thought. In the development of the system, whether in the mind of its author or in that of any learner, the starting point is necessarily the individual consciousness — the finite *Ego*. But when the logical processes of the understanding have performed their office, and led us from this, the nearest of our spiritual experiences, to that higher point in which finite individuality disappears in the great thought of an all-embracing consciousness—an Infinite *Ego*,—it becomes unnecessary to reiterate the initial steps of the investigation—to imitate the gropings of the school-boy rather than the comprehensive vision of the man. From this higher point of view Fichte now looked out on human life and action, and saw in it no longer the peculiarities of the individual, but the harmonious although diversified manifestation of the one Idea of universal being,—the self-revelation of the Absolute—the infinitely varied forms under which God becomes " manifest in the flesh."

The first traces of this change in his speculative position are observable in his " Bestimmung des Menschen," published in 1799, in which, as we have already said, may be found the most complete exposition of his philosophy which can be communicated in a popular form. In 1801 appeared his " Antwortschreiben an Reinhold," and his " Sonnenklarer Bericht an das grössere Publicum über das eigentliche Wesen der neuesten Philosophie." These he intended to follow up in 1802 with a more strictly scientific and complete account of the " Wissenschaftslehre," designed for the philosophical reader only. But he was induced to postpone this purpose, partly on account of the recent modification of his own philosophical point of view, and partly because of the existing state of the literary world, in which Schelling's Natur-Philosophie was now making rapid progress. Before communicating to the world the work which should be handed down to posterity as the finished institute of his theory, it appeared to him necessary, first of all to prepare the public mind for its reception by a series of introductory applications of his system to subjects of general interest. But this purpose was likewise laid aside for a time,—principally, it would seem, from uncertainty as to the mode in which he should communicate with the world, and perhaps also from a certain degree of dissatisfaction with the reception which his works had hitherto received. These feelings occasioned a silence of four years on his part, and are characteristically expressed in the preface to the following Lectures.

In the meantime, although Fichte retired for a season from the prominent position which he had hitherto occupied in the public eye, it was impossible for him to remain inactive. Shut out from communication with the "*reading* public," he sought to gather around him fit *hearers* to whom he might impart the high message with which he was charged. This was indeed his favourite mode of communication: in the lecture-room his fiery eloquence found a freer scope than the form of a literary work would permit. A circle of pupils soon gathered around him at Berlin. His private lectures were attended by the most distinguished scholars and statesmen: W. Schlegel and Kotzebue, the Minister Schrotter, the High Chancellor Beyme, and the Minister von Altenstein, might be found among his auditory.

In 1804 an opportunity presented itself of resuming his favourite vocation of an academic teacher. This was an invitation from Russia to assume the chair of Philosophy in the University of Charkow. The existing state of literary culture in that country, however, did not seem to offer any promising field for his exertions; and another proposal, which appeared to open the way to a more useful application of his powers occurring at the same time, he declined the invitation from Charkow. The second invitation was likewise a foreign one,—from Bavaria, namely, to the Philosophic chair at Landshut. It was accompanied by pecuniary proposals of a most advantageous nature. But experience had taught Fichte to set a much higher value upon the internal conditions of such an office, than upon its outward advantages. In desiring an academic chair, he sought only an opportunity of carrying out his plan of a strictly philosophical education, with a view to the future reception of the Wissenschaftslehre in its most perfect form. To this purpose he had devoted his life, and no pecuniary considerations could induce him to lay it aside. But its thorough fulfilment demanded absolute freedom of teaching and writing as its primary condition, and this was therefore the first point to which Fichte looked in any appointment which might be offered to him. He frankly laid his views on this subject before the Bavarian Government. "This plan," he says, "might perhaps be carried forward without the support of any government, although this has its difficulties. But if any enlightened government should resolve to support it, it would, in my opinion, acquire thereby a deathless fame, and become the benefactor of humanity." Whether the Bavarian Government was dissatisfied with the conditions required, does not appear,—but the negotiations on this subject were shortly afterwards broken off.

At last, however, an opportunity occurred of carrying out his views in Prussia itself. Through the influence of his friends Beyme and Altenstein with the Minister Hardenberg, he was appointed Professor of Philosophy at the University of Erlangen, with the liberty of returning to Berlin during the winter to continue his philosophic lectures there. In May 1805 he entered upon his new duties with a brilliant success which seemed to promise a repetition of the epoch of Jena. Besides the course of lectures to his own students, in which he took a comprehensive survey of the conditions and method of scientific knowledge in general, he delivered a series of private lectures to his fellowprofessors and others, in which he laid down his views in a more abstract form. In addition to these labours, he delivered to the whole students of the University his celebrated lectures on the "Nature of the Scholar." These remarkable discourses must have had a powerful effect on the young and ardent minds to which they were addressed. Never, perhaps, were the moral dignity and sacredness of the literary calling set forth with more impressive earnestness.

Encouraged by the brilliant success which had attended his prelections at Erlangen, Fichte now resolved to give forth to the world the results of his later studies, and especially to embody, in some practical and generally intelligible form, his great conception of the eternal revelation of God in consciousness. Accordingly, on his return to Berlin in the winter of 1805–6, he published the course of lectures we have just alluded to, on the "Nature of the Scholar," followed soon after by another course which had been delivered at Berlin during the previous year, under the title of "Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters." Of the first of these a translation is now offered to the English reader. The Scholar is here represented as he who, possessed and actuated by the Divine Idea, labours to obtain for that Idea an outward manifestation in the world, either by communicating it to his fellow-men (as Teacher); or by directly embodying it in visible forms (as Ruler, Lawgiver, Statesman, &c.) The second course is an application of the same great principle to General History, abounding in profound and comprehensive views of the history, prospects, and destiny of man. This series of popular works was completed by the publication, in the spring of 1806, of the "Anweisung zum Seligen Leben, oder die Religionslehre;"—the most important of all his later writings, which contains the final results of his philosophy in its most exalted application.

Fichte's long-cherished hopes of founding an academical institution in accordance with his philosophical views, seemed now about to be realized. During the winter vacation, Hardenberg communicated with him on the subject of a new organization of the University at Erlangen. Fichte drew up a plan for this purpose, which was submitted to the Minister in 1806. But fortune again interposed: the outbreak of the war with France prevented his resuming the duties which had been so well begun.

The campaign of 1805 had subjected the greater part of Germany to the power of Napoleon. Prussia, almost alone, maintained her independence, surrounded on every side by the armies or vassals of France. Her struggle with the giant-power of the continent was of short duration. On the 9th October 1806 war was declared—on the 14th the double battle of Auerstadt and Jena was fought—and on the 21st Napoleon entered Berlin. In rapid succession, all the fortresses of Prussia fell into the hands of the invader.

Fichte eagerly desired permission to accompany the army which his country sent forth against her invaders. The hopes of Germany hung upon its progress; its success would bring freedom and peace,—its failure, military despotism, with all its attendant horrors. Opposed to the well-trained troops of France, elated with victory and eager for new conquests, the defenders of Germany needed all the aid which high principle and ardent patriotism could bring to their cause. To maintain such a spirit in the army by such addresses as afterwards appeared under the celebrated title of "Reden an die Deutschen," Fichte conceived to be his appropriate part in the general resistance to the enemy; and for that purpose he desired to be near the troops. "If the orator," he says, "must content himself with speech—if he cannot fight in your ranks to prove the truth of his principles by his actions, by his contempt of danger and of death, by his presence in the most perilous places of the combat,—this is only the fault of his age, which has separated the calling of the scholar from that of the warrior. But he feels that if he had been taught to carry arms, he would have been behind none in courage; he laments that his age has denied him the privilege accorded to Æschylus and Cervantes, to make good his words by manlike deeds. He would restore that time if he could; and in the present circumstances, which he looks upon as bringing with them a new phase of his existence, he would proceed rather to deeds than to words. But since he may only speak, he would speak fire and sword. Nor would he do this securely and away from danger. In his discourses he would give utterance to truths belonging to this subject with all the clearness with which he himself sees them, with all the earnestness of which he is capable,—utter them avowedly and with his own name,—truths which should cause him to be held worthy of death before the tribunal of the enemy. And on that account he would not faint-heartedly conceal himself, but speak boldly before your face, that he might either live free in his fatherland, or perish in its overthrow."

The rapid progress of the war prevented compliance with his wish, but the spirit which gave it birth was well appreciated by Frederick-William. "Your idea, dear Fichte," says the reply to his proposal, "does you honour. The King thanks you for your offer;—perhaps we may make use of it afterwards. But the King must first speak to his army by deeds: then eloquence may increase the advantages of victory."

The defeat of Jena, and the rapid march of Napoleon upon Berlin, which remained defenceless, rendered it necessary for all who had indentified themselves with the cause of their country to seek refuge in instant flight. Fichte's resolution was soon taken:—he would share the dangers of his fatherland, rather than purchase safety by submission. Fichte's wife remained in Berlin to take charge of their own and of Hufeland's household, while the two friends fled beyond the Oder.

Fichte now took up his residence at Königsberg to await the result of the war. The uncertainty of his future prospects, and the dangerous situation in which he had left his family, did not prevent him from pursuing his vocation as a public teacher, even in the face of many hindrances. During the winter he delivered a course of philosophical lectures in the University, having been appointed provisional professor of philosophy during his residence. He stedfastly resisted the earnest desire of his wife to return to Berlin during its occupancy by the French, conceiving it to be his duty to submit to every privation and discomfort rather than give an indirect sanction to the presence of the enemy by sitting down quietly under their rule, although he could now do so with perfect safety to himself. "Such a return," he says, "would stand in direct contradiction to the declarations made in my address to the King, of which address my present circumstances are the result. And if no other keep me to my word, it is just so much more my duty to hold myself to it. It is precisely when other scholars of note in our country are wavering, that he who has been hitherto true, should stand the firmer in his uprightness."

The consequences of the battle of Eylau (8th February 1807) rendered his residence in Königsberg no longer safe or desirable. He therefore removed to Copenhagen, where he arrived on the 9th of July, having been detained for some weeks at Memel, and on the sea, by contrary winds. Soon after this, peace being at length concluded, and Berlin evacuated, he returned to his family towards the end of August.

With the return of peace, the Prussian Government determined to repair the loss of political importance, by fostering among its citizens the desire of intellectual distinction and the love of free speculation. It seemed to the eminent men who then stood around the throne of Frederick-William, that the temple of German independence had now to be rebuilt from its foundations; that the old stock of liberty having withered or been swept away in the tornado which had just passed over their heads, a new growth must take its place, springing from a deeper root and quickened by a fresher stream. One of the first means which suggested itself for the attainment of this purpose, was the establishment at Berlin of a new school of higher education, free from the imperfections of the old Universities, from which, as from the spiritual heart of the community, a current of life and energy might be poured forth through all its members. Fichte was chosen by the Minister as the man before all others fitted for this task, and unlimited power was given him to frame for the new University a constitution which should ensure its efficiency and success. No employment could have been more congenial to Fichte's inclinations;—it presented him at last with the long-wished-for opportunity of developing a systematic plan of human instruction, founded on the spiritual nature of man. He entered with ardour upon the undertaking, and towards the end of 1807 his plan was completed and laid before the Minister. Its chief feature was its perfect unity of purpose—the complete subordination of every branch of instruction to the one great object of all teaching,—not the inculcation of opinion, but the spiritual culture and elevation of the individual. The institution was to be an organic whole;—not a mere assemblage of teachers holding various and perhaps opposite views, and living only to disseminate these—but of men with a common purpose, steadily pursuing one recognized object. The office of the Professor was not to repeat verbally what already stood printed in books, and might be found there, but to exercise a diligent supervision over the studies of the pupil, and see that he fully acquired, by his own effort, and as a personal and independent possession, the branch of knowledge which was the object of his studies. It was thus *a school for the scientific use of the understanding*, in which positive or historical knowledge was to be looked upon only as a vehicle of instruction, not as the ultimate end:—spiritual independence, intellectual strength, moral dignity—these were the great ends to the attainment of which everything else was but a means. The plan met with distinguished approbation from the Minister to whom it was presented; and if, when the University was actually established some time afterwards, the ordinary and more easily fulfilled constitution of such schools was followed, it is to be attributed to the management of the undertaking having passed into other hands, and to the difficulty of finding teachers who would coöperate in the accomplishment of the scheme.

But the misfortunes of his country induced Fichte to make a yet more direct attempt to rouse the fallen spirit of liberty, and once more to awaken in the hearts of his countrymen the desire of independence, which now lay crushed beneath a foreign yoke. Prussia was the last forlorn hope of German freedom, and it now seemed to lie almost at the mercy of the conqueror. Fichte was well aware of the dangers attending any open attempt to excite a spirit of opposition to the French, but he was not accustomed to weigh danger against duty; with him there was but short pause between conviction and action. " The sole question," said he to himself, " is this:—canst thou hope that the good to be attained is greater than the danger? The good is the reawakening and elevation of the people; against which my personal danger is not to be reckoned, but for which it may rather be most advantageously incurred. My family and my son shall not want the support of the nation,—the least of the advantages of having a martyr for their father. This is the best choice. I could not devote my life to a better end."

Thus heroically resolved that he, at least, should not be wanting in his duty to his fatherland, he delivered his celebrated " Reden an die Deutschen"—(*Addresses to the German People*)—in the academical buildings in Berlin during the winter of 1807–8. His voice was often drowned by the trumpets of the French troops, and well-known spies frequently made their appearance among his auditory; but he continued, undismayed, to direct all the fervour of his eloquence against the despotism of Napoleon and the system of spoiling and oppression under which his country groaned. It is somewhat singular, that while Davoust threatened the chief literary men of Berlin with vengeance if they should either speak or write upon the political state of Germany, Fichte should have remained unmolested — the only one who did speak out, openly and fearlessly, against the foreign yoke.

This spirit-stirring course of public activity was interrupted by a severe illness which attacked him in the spring of 1808. It was his first illness, and it took so determined a hold of his powerful constitution, that he never thoroughly got rid of its effects. Deep-seated nervous disease, and particularly an affection of the liver, reduced him to great weakness, and for a long time it seemed doubtful whether his life could be saved. It was only after some months of suffering that the disease settled down upon a particular limb, and left him with a rheumatic lameness of the left arm and right foot, which, with an accompanying inflammation in the eyes, hindered him for a long time from resuming his habits of active life. He was removed several times to the baths of Teplitz with beneficial effect. The tedium of convalescence was relieved by study of the great authors of Italy, Spain, and Portugal. At an earlier period of his life he had made himself acquainted with the languages of these countries, and had produced many translations from their poets, particularly an entire version of the first canto of Dante's Divina Commedia,* and of one of the most beautiful episodes in the Lusiad of Camoens. And now, in the season of debility and pain, the noble thoughts handed down by the great poets of the south as an everlasting possession to the world, became to him the springs of new strength and dignity. Nor did he cease altogether from direct endeavours for the good of his fellow-men. Even on the sickbed he found means of affording relief and encouragement to Ernst Wagner, a true and warm-hearted friend of his country and of all good men, but whose spirit was crushed almost to hopelessness by the pressure of disease and penury.

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* Printed in the "Vesta" for 1807.

Considerable doubts had arisen as to the propriety of placing the new University in a large city like Berlin. It was urged that the metropolis presented too many temptations to idleness and dissipation to render it an eligible situation for a seminary devoted to the education of young men. This was the view entertained by the Minister Stein, but warmly combated by Wolff, Fichte, and others. Stein was at length won over, and the University was opened in 1810. The King gave one of the finest palaces of Berlin for the purpose, and all the appliances of mental culture were provided on the most liberal scale. Learned men of the greatest eminence in their respective departments were invited from all quarters—Wolff, Fichte, Müller, Humboldt, De Wette, Schleiermacher, Neander, Klaproth and Savigny—higher names than these cannot easily be found in their peculiar walks of literature and science. By the suffrages of his fellow-teachers, Fichte was unanimously elected Rector.

Thus placed at the head of an institution from which so much was expected, Fichte laboured unceasingly to establish a high tone of moral feeling in the new University, convinced that thereby he should best promote the dignity as well as the welfare of his country. His dearest wish was to see Germany *free*,—free alike from foreign oppression and from internal reproach. He longed to see the stern sublimity of old Greek citizenship reäppear among a people whom the conquerors of Greece had failed to subdue. And therefore it was before all things necessary that they who were to go forth as the apostles of truth and virtue, who were to be the future representatives among the people of all that is dignified and sacred, should themselves be deeply impressed with the high nature of their calling, and keep unsullied the honour which must guide and guard them in the discharge of its duties. He therefore applied himself to the reformation of such features in the student-life as seemed irreconcilable with its nobleness,—to the suppression of the Landsmannschaften, and of the practice of duelling. Courts of honour, composed of the students themselves, decided upon all such quarrels as had usually led to personal encounters. During his two years' rectorship, Fichte laid the foundation of the character which the University still maintains, of being the best regulated as well as one of the most efficient schools in Germany.

The year 1812 was an important one for Europe, and particularly for Germany. The gigantic power of Napoleon had now reached its culminating point. Joseph Bonaparte reigned at Madrid, and Murat at Naples;—Austria was subdued, and the fair daughter of the House of Hapsburg had united her fate to that of the conqueror of her race;—Prussia lay at his mercy;—Holland and the Free Towns were annexed to the territory of France, which now extended from Sicily to Denmark. One thing alone was wanting to make him sole master of the continent of Europe, and that was the conquest of Russia. His passion for universal dominion led him into the great military error of his life,—the attempt to conquer a country defended by its climate from his power, and which, even if subdued, could never have been retained. He rushed on to the fate which sooner or later awaits unbridled ambition. The immense armies of France were poured through Germany upon the North, to find a grave amid the snows of Smolensk or in the waters of the Berezina.

And now Prussia resolved to make a decisive effort to throw off a yoke which had always been hateful to her. The charm was now broken which made men look on the might of Napoleon as invincible;—the unconquerable battalions had been routed; fortune had turned against her former favourite. The King entered into an alliance with the Russian Emperor, and in January 1813, having retired from Berlin to Breslau, he sent forth a proclamation calling upon the youth of the country to arm themselves in defence of its liberty. Nobly was his appeal responded to. The nation rose as one man; all distinctions were forgotten in the high enthusiasm of the time; prince and peasant, teacher and scholar, artisan and merchant, poet and philosopher, swelled the ranks of the army of liberation.

Fichte now renewed his former application to be permitted to accompany the troops in the capacity of preacher or orator, that he might share their dangers and animate their courage. Difficulties arising in the way of this arrangement, he resolved to remain at his post in Berlin, and to continue his lectures until he and his scholars should be called personally to the defence of their country. The other professors united with him in a common agreement, that the widows and children of such of their number as fell in the war should be provided for by the cares of the survivors. It is worthy of remark, that amid this eager enthusiasm Fichte resolutely opposed the adoption of any proceedings against the enemy which might cast dishonour on the sacred cause of freedom. While a French garrison still held Berlin, one of his students revealed to him a plan for firing their magazine during the night. Fichte immediately disclosed the whole to the superintendent of police, by whose timely interference the scheme was defeated.

During the summer of 1813, Fichte delivered from the Academical Chair those views of the existing circumstances of his country, and of the war in which it was engaged, which he was prevented from communicating to the army directly. These lectures were afterwards printed under the title of "Ueber den Begriff des wahren Kriegs,"—(*On the idea of a true war.*) With a clearness and energy of thought which seemed to increase with the difficulties and danger of his country, he roused an irresistible opposition to proposals of peace which, through the mediation of Austria, were offered during the armistice in June and July. The demands of Napoleon left Germany only a nominal independence; a brave and earnest people sought for true freedom. " A stout heart and no peace," was Fichte's motto, and his countrymen agreed with him. Hostilities were recommenced in August 1813.

In the beginning of the winter half-year, Fichte resumed his philosophical prelections at the University. His subject was an introduction to philosophy upon an entirely new plan, which should render his system much more easily attainable. He had now accomplished the great object of his life,—the completion, in his own mind, of that scheme of knowledge by which his name was to be known to posterity. Existing in his own thought as one clear and comprehensive whole, he believed that he could now communicate it to others, in a simpler and more intelligible form than it had yet assumed. It was therefore his intention to devote the following summer to this purpose, and leave behind him a finished record of his philosophy in its maturity and completeness. But fate had ordered otherwise.

The vicinity of Berlin to the seat of the great struggle on which the liberties of Germany were depending, rendered it the most eligible place for the reception of the wounded and diseased. The hospitals of the city were crowded, and the ordinary attendants of these establishments were found insufficient in number to supply the wants of the patients. The authorities therefore called upon the inhabitants for their assistance, and Fichte's wife was one of the first who responded to the call. The noble and generous disposition which had rendered her the worthy companion of the philosopher, now led her forth, regardless of danger, to give all her powers to woman's holiest ministry. Not only did she labour with unresting assiduity to assuage the bodily sufferings of the wounded, and to surround them with every comfort which their situation required and which she had the power to supply; she likewise poured words of consolation into many a breaking heart, and awakened new strength and faithfulness in those who were 'ready to perish.'

For five months she pursued with uninterrupted devotion her attendance at the hospitals, and, although not naturally of a strong constitution, she escaped the contagion which surrounded her. But on the 3d of January 1814 she was seized with a nervous fever, which speedily rose to an alarming height, so that almost every hope of her recovery was lost. Fichte's affection never suffered him to leave her side, except during the time of his lectures. It is an astonishing proof of his self-command, that after a day of anxious watching at the deathbed, as it seemed, of her he held dearest on earth, he should be able to address his class in the evening, for two consecutive hours, on the most profound and abstract subjects of human speculation,—uncertain whether, on his return, he might find that loved one still alive. At last the crisis of the fever was past, and Fichte received again the faithful partner of his cares, rescued from the grave.

But even in this season of joy, in the embrace of gratulation he received the seeds of death. Scarcely was his wife pronounced out of danger, than he himself caught the infection, and was attacked by the insidious disease. Its first symptom was nervous sleeplessness, which resisted the effect of baths and the other usual remedies. Soon, however, the true nature of the malady was no longer doubtful, and during the rapid progress of his illness, his lucid moments became shorter and less frequent. In one of these he was told of Blucher's passage of the Rhine, and the final expulsion of the French from Germany. That spirit-stirring information touched a chord that roused him from his unconciousness, and he awoke to a bright and glorious vision of a better future for his fatherland. The triumphant excitement mingled itself with his fevered fancies:—he imagined himself in the midst of the victorious struggle, striking for the liberties of Germany;—and then again it was against his own disease that he fought, and power of will and firm resolution were the arms by which he was to conquer it. Shortly before his death, when his son approached him with medicine, he said, with his usual look of deep affection—"Let it alone; I need no more medicine: I feel that I am well." On the eleventh day of his illness, on the night of the 27th January 1814, he died. The last hours of his life were passed in deep and unbroken sleep.

Fichte died in his fifty-second year, with his bodily and mental faculties unimpaired by age; scarcely a grey hair shaded the deep black upon his bold and erect head. In stature he was low, but powerful and muscular. His step was firm, and his whole appearance and address bespoke the rectitude, firmness, and earnestness of his character.

His widow survived him for five years. By the kindness of the Monarch she was enabled to pass the remainder of her life in ease and competence, devoting herself to the superintendence of her son's education. She died on the 29th January 1819, after an illness of seven days.

Fichte died as he had lived,—the priest of knowledge, the apostle of freedom, the martyr of humanity. His character stands written in his life, a massive but severely simple whole. It has no parts;—the depth and earnestness on which it rests, speak forth alike in his thoughts, words, and actions. No man of his time—few perhaps of any time—exercised a more powerful, spirit-stirring influence over the minds of his fellow-countrymen. The impulse which he communicated to the national thought extended far beyond the sphere of his personal influence;—it has awakened—it will still awaken—high emotion and manly resolution in thousands who never heard his voice. The ceaseless effort of his life was to rouse men to a sense of the divinity of their own nature—to fix their thoughts upon a spiritual life as the only true and real life—to teach them to look upon all else as mere show and unreality, and thus to lead them to constant effort after the highest Ideal of purity, virtue, independence and self-denial. To this ennobling enterprise he consecrated his being;—to it he devoted his gigantic powers of thought, his iron will, his resistless eloquence. But he also taught it in deeds more eloquent than words. In the strong reality of his life,—in his intense love for all things beautiful and true,—in his incorruptible integrity and heroic devotion to the right, we see a living manifestation of his principles. His life is the true counterpart of his philosophy;—it is that of a strong, free, incorruptible man. And with all the sternness of his morality, he is full of gentle and generous affections, of deep, overflowing sympathies. No tone of love, no soft breathing of tenderness, fall unheeded on that high, royal soul, but in its calm sublimity find a welcome and a home. Even his hatred is the offspring of a higher love. Truly indeed has he been described by one of our own country's brightest ornaments as a "colossal, adamantine spirit, standing erect and clear, like a Cato Major among degenerate men; fit to have been the teacher of the Stoa, and to have discoursed of beauty and virtue in the groves of Academe." But the sublimity of his intellect casts no shade on the soft current of his affections, which flows, pure and unbroken, through the whole course of his life, to enrich, fertilize, and adorn it. In no other man of modern times do we find the stern grandeur of ancient virtue so blended with the kindlier humanities of our nature, which flourish best under a gentler civilization. We prize his philosophy deeply; it is to us an invaluable possession, for it seems the noblest exposition to which we have yet listened, of human nature and divine truth; but with reverent thankfulness we acknowledge a still higher debt, for he has left behind him the best gift which man can bequeath to man—a brave, heroic human life.

In the first churchyard from the Oranienburg gate of Berlin, stands a tall obelisk with this inscription:—

THE TEACHERS SHALL SHINE
AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT;
AND THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS
AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER.

It marks the grave of Fichte. The faithful partner of his life sleeps at his feet.

ON

THE NATURE OF THE SCHOLAR,

AND

ITS MANIFESTATIONS.

A COURSE OF LECTURES DELIVERED AT ERLANGEN
IN THE SUMMER OF 1805.

BY

JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE.

PREFACE.

THESE LECTURES make no claim to the character of a literary work such as I have endeavoured to depict in the tenth of them, but are spoken discourses, which I commit to the press in the hope that they may thus be useful to some who had no opportunity of hearing them. They may also be considered as a new and improved edition of the Lectures on the Vocation of the Scholar, which I published twelve years ago;—the task being executed in such a manner as was possible under the conditions laid upon me. And were I called to account for the way in which I have fulfilled my vocation as a public teacher in Erlangen, I should have no objection to these Lectures being taken as an element in the judgment. Further I have nothing to say about them to the reading public, with whom I feel a constantly increasing dislike to hold communication.

Fichte.

BERLIN, *January* 1806.

CONTENTS.

Lecture I. General Plan.

II. Further Definition of the Meaning of the Divine Idea.

III. Of the Progressive Scholar in general, and in particular of Genius and Industry.

IV. Of Integrity in Study.

V. How the Integrity of the Student shows itself.

VI. Of Academical Freedom.

VII. Of the Finished Scholar in general.

VIII. Of the Scholar as Ruler.

IX. Of the Scholar as Teacher.

X. Of the Scholar as Author.

LECTURE I.

GENERAL PLAN.

I NOW open the course of public lectures which I have announced on the roll under the title "*De Moribus Eruditorum.*" This inscription may be translated—"Morality for the Scholar,"—"On the Vocation of the Scholar,"—"On the Duty of the Scholar," &c.;—but the idea itself, to be understood as well as translated, demands a deeper investigation. I proceed to this preliminary inquiry.

Generally speaking, when we hear the word morality, the idea is suggested of a cultivation of character and conduct according to rule and precept. But it is only true in a limited sense, and only as seen from a lower point of enlightenment, that man is formed by precept, or can form himself upon precept. On the contrary, from the highest point—that of absolute truth, on which we here take our stand—whatever is to be manifested in the thought or deed of man, must first be inwardly present in his nature, and indeed itself constitute his nature, being, and life; for that which lies in the essential nature of man must necessarily reveal itself in his outward life, shine forth in all his thoughts, desires, and acts, and become his unvarying and unalterable character. How the freedom of man, and all the efforts by means of culture, instruction, religion, legislation, to form him to goodness, are to be reconciled with this truth, is the object of an entirely different inquiry, into which we do not now enter. We can here only declare in general, that the two principles may be thoroughly reconciled, and that a deeper study of philosophy will clearly show the possibility of their union.

The fixed character and modes of action, or in a word the *duty*, of the true Scholar, when contemplated from the highest point of view, can, properly speaking, only be described, not by any means enacted or imposed. On the contrary, this apparent and outwardly visible character of the true Scholar is founded upon that which already exists within him in his own being, independent of all manifestation and before all manifestation; and it is necessarily produced and unchangeably determined by this inward nature. Hence, if we are to describe his duty, we must first unfold his nature:—only from the idea of the latter, can the former be surely and completely derived. To make such deduction from this pre-supposed nature, is the proper object of these lectures. Their contents may therefore be briefly stated: they are—*a description of the nature of the Scholar, and its manifestations in the world of freedom.*

The following propositions will aid us in attaining some insight into the nature of the Scholar:—

1. The whole material world, with all its adaptations and ends, and in particular the life of man in this world, are by no means, in themselves and in deed and truth, that which they seem to be to the uncultivated and natural sense of man; but there is something higher, which lies concealed behind all natural appearance. This concealed foundation of all appearance may, in its greatest universality, be aptly named *the Divine Idea;* and this expression, "Divine Idea," shall not in the meantime signify anything more than this higher ground of appearance, until we shall have more clearly defined its meaning.

2. A certain part of the meaning of this Divine Idea of the world is accessible to, and conceivable by, the cultivated

mind, and, by the free activity of man, under the guidance of this Idea, may be impressed upon the world of sense, and represented in it.

3. If there were among men some individuals who had attained wholly or partially to the possession of this last-mentioned or attainable portion of the Divine Idea of the world, whether with the view of maintaining and extending the knowledge of the Idea among men by communicating it to others, or of imaging it forth in the world of sense, by direct and immediate action thereon,—then were these individuals the seat of a higher and more spiritual life in the world, and of a progressive development thereof according to the Divine Idea.

4. In every age, that kind of education and spiritual culture by means of which the age hopes to lead mankind to the knowledge of the ascertained part of the Divine Idea, is the learned culture of the age; and every man who partakes in this culture is the Scholar of the age.

From what has now been said, it clearly follows that the whole of the training and culture which an age calls learned education, is only the means towards a knowledge of the attainable portion of the Divine Idea, and is only valuable in so far as it actually is such a means, and truly fulfils its purpose. Whether in any given case this end has been attained or not, can never be determined by common observation, for *it* is quite blind to the Idea, and can do no more than recognize the merely empirical fact whether a man has enjoyed or has not enjoyed the advantage of what is called a learned education. Hence there are two very different ideas of a Scholar:—the one, according to appearance and mere intention; and in this respect, every one must be considered as a Scholar who has gone through a course of learned education, or, as it is commonly expressed, who has studied or who still studies:—the other, according to truth; and in this respect, he only is to be looked upon as a Scholar who has, through the learned culture of his age, arrived at a knowledge of the Idea. *Through the learned culture of his age,* I say; for if a man, without the use of this means, can arrive at a knowledge of the Idea by some other way (and I am far from denying that he may do so), yet such an one will be unable either to communicate his knowledge theoretically, or to realize it immediately in the world according to any well-defined rule, because he must want that knowledge of his age, and of the means of operating upon it, which can only be acquired in schools of learning. Hence there will indeed be a higher life alive within him, but not an activity which grasps the rest of the world and calls forth its powers; and since, without this acquirement, the sole and peculiar purpose of learned culture cannot be exhibited in him, we will have a most superior man indeed, but no Scholar.

As for us, we have here no thought of considering this matter by outward seeming, but according to truth. Henceforward, throughout the whole course of these lectures, he only will be esteemed as a Scholar who through the learned culture of his age has actually attained a knowledge of the Idea, or at least strives with life and strength to attain it. He who has received this culture without thereby attaining to the Idea, is in truth (as we are now to look upon the matter)—nothing;—he is an equivocal mongrel between the possessor of the Idea and him who is altogether supported and borne up by common reality;—in his vain struggles after the Idea, he has lost the power to lay hold of and cultivate reality, and now wavers between two worlds without properly belonging to either of them.

The distinction which we have already noticed in the modes of the direct application of the Idea *in general,* is obviously also applicable *in particular* to him who comes to the possession of this Idea through learned culture;—that is, to the Scholar. Either it is his peculiar object to communicate to others the Idea of which he has himself attained a living knowledge;—and then his proper business is the theory of ideas, general or particular—he is a teacher of knowledge. But it is only as distinguished from, and contrasted with the second application of the Idea, that the business of the scientific teacher is characterized as mere theory; in a wider sense it is as practical as that of the more directly active man. The object of his activity is the human mind and spirit; and it is a most ennobling employment to prepare these for, and elevate them to, the reception of the Idea according to a fixed plan. Or it may be the peculiar business of him who through learned culture has obtained possession of the Idea, to fashion the world (which, as regards his design, is a passive world), after this Idea; perhaps to model the Legislation,—the legal and social relations of men to each other,—or even that all-surrounding Nature which constantly presses upon their higher being,—after the Divine Idea of justice or of beauty, so far as that is possible in the age and under the conditions in which he is placed; while he reserves to himself his own original conceptions, as well as the art with which he impresses them on the world. In this case he is a pragmatic Scholar. No one, I may remark in passing, should intermeddle in the direct guidance and ordering of human events, who is not a Scholar in the true sense of the word; that is, who has not by means of learned culture become a participator in the Divine Idea. With labourers and hodmen it is otherwise:—their virtue consists in punctual obedience, in the careful avoidance of all independent thought, and in confiding the direction of their occupations to other men.

From a different point of view arises another significant distinction in the idea of the Scholar: this, namely—*either* the Scholar has actually laid hold of the whole Divine Idea in so far as it is attainable by man, or of a particular part of it,—which last indeed is not possible without having first a clear survey of the whole;—either he has actually laid hold of it, and penetrated into its significance until it stands lucid and distinct before him, so that it has become his own possession, to be recalled at any time in the same shape,—an element in his personality,—and then he is a complete and finished Scholar, a man who has gone through his studies:—*or*, he as yet only strives and struggles to attain a clear insight into the Idea generally, or into that particular portion or point of it from which he, for his part, will penetrate the whole:—already, one by one, sparks of light arise on every side, and disclose a higher world before him; but they do not yet unite into one indivisible whole—they vanish as they came, without his bidding, and he cannot yet bring them under the dominion of his will;—and then he is a progressive, a self-forming Scholar—*a Student*. That it be really the Idea which is either possessed or struggled after, is common to both of these: if the striving is only after the outward form, the mere letter of learned culture, then we have, if the round is finished—the complete,—if it is unfinished—the progressive *bungler*. The latter is always more tolerable than the former, for it may still be hoped that in pursuing his course he may perhaps at some future point be laid hold of by the Idea; but of the former all hope is lost. This, gentlemen, is the idea of the nature of the Scholar; and these are all the possible modifications of that idea,—not in any respect changing the original idea, but wholly arising out of it;—the idea, namely, of fixed and definite being which alone furnishes a sufficient answer to the question—What is the Scholar?

But philosophical knowledge, such as we are now seeking, is not satisfied with answering the question, What is?—philosophy asks also for the How, and, strictly speaking, asks only for this, as for that which is already implied in the What. All philosophical knowledge is, by its nature, not empiric, but genetic,—not merely laying hold of existing being, but producing and constructing this being from the very root of its life. Thus, with respect to the Scholar, the determinate form of whose being we have now described, there still remains the question—How does he become a

Scholar?—and since his being and growth is an uninterrupted, living, constantly self-producing being—How does he maintain the life of a Scholar?

I answer shortly,—by his inherent, characteristic, and all-engrossing love for the Idea. Consider it thus:—Every form of existence holds and upholds itself, and in living existences this self-support, and the consciousness of it, is self-love. In individual human beings the eternal Divine Idea takes up its abode, as their spiritual nature; this existence of the Divine Idea in them encircles itself with unspeakable love; and then we say, adapting our language to common appearance, this man loves the Idea, and lives in the Idea,—when in truth it is the Idea itself which, in his stead and in his person, lives and loves itself, and his person is only the sensible manifestation of this existence of the Idea, and has, in and for itself alone, neither significance nor life. This strictly framed definition or formula lays open the whole matter, and we can now proceed once more to adopt the language of appearance without fear of misapprehension. In the true Scholar the Idea has acquired a personal existence which has entirely superseded his own, and absorbed it in itself. He loves the Idea, not before all else,—for he loves nothing beside it—he loves it alone;—it alone is the source of all his joys, of all his pleasures; it alone is the spring of all his thoughts, efforts, and deeds; for it alone does he live, and without it life would be to him tasteless and odious. In both—in the complete as well as in the progressive Scholar—does the Idea reside, with this difference only,—that in the former it has attained all the clearness and firm consistency which was possible in that individual and under existing circumstances, and having now acquired a settled abode within him, spreads itself around, and strives to flow forth in living words and deeds;—while in the latter it is still active only within himself, striving after the development and strengthening of such an existence as it may attain under the circumstances in which he is placed. To both alike would their life be valueless, if they could not fashion either others or themselves after the Idea.

This is the sole and unvarying life-principle of the Scholar—of him to whom *we* give that name. All his deeds and efforts, under all possible conditions in which he can be supposed to exist, spring with absolute necessity from this principle. Hence, we have only to contemplate him in all the conceivable relations which are requisite for our purpose, and we may calculate with certainty both his inward and outward life, and describe it beforehand. And in this way it is possible to derive with scientific accuracy, from the essential nature of the Scholar, its manifestations in the world of freedom or apparent chance. This is our present task, and that the rule for its solution.

We shall turn first of all to the Students,—that is to say, to those who are justly entitled to the name of progressive Scholars in the sense of that word as already defined; and it is proper that we should first apply to them the principles which we have laid down. If they are not such as we have supposed them to be, then our words will be to them mere words, without sense, meaning, or application. If they are such as we have supposed them to be, then they will in due time become mature and perfect Scholars; for that effort of the Idea to unfold itself which is so much higher than all the pursuits of sense, is also infinitely more mighty, and with silent power breaks a way for itself through every obstacle. It will be well for the studious youth to know now what he shall one day become—to contemplate in his youth a picture of his riper age. I shall therefore, after performing my first duty, proceed also to construct from first principles the character of the finished Scholar.

Clearness is gained by contrast; and therefore, wherever I show how the Scholar will manifest himself, I shall also declare how, for the same reasons, he will *not* manifest himself.

In both divisions of the subject, but particularly in the second, where I have to speak of the finished Scholar, I shall guard myself carefully from making any satirical allusion to the present state of the literary world, any censure of it, or generally any reference to it; and I entreat my hearers once for all not to take any such suggestion. The philosopher peacefully constructs his theorem upon given principles, without deigning to turn his attention to the actual state of things, or needing the recollection of it to enable him to pursue his inquiry; just as the geometer constructs his scheme without troubling himself whether his purely abstract figures can be copied with our instruments. And it may be permitted, especially to the unprejudiced and studious youth, to remain in ignorance of the degeneracies and corruptions of the society into which he must one day enter, until he has acquired power sufficient to stem the tide of its example.

This, gentlemen, is the entire plan of the lectures which I now propose to deliver, with the principles on which they shall be founded. To-day, I shall only add one or two observations to what I have already said.

In considerations like those of to-day, or those, necessarily similar in their nature, which are to follow, it is common for men to censure,—first, their severity,—very often with the good-natured supposition that the speaker was only not aware that his strictness was disagreeable to them—that they have only frankly to tell him this, and he will then reconsider the matter, and soften down his principles. Thus we have said, that he who with his learned culture has not attained a knowledge of the Idea, or at least struggles to attain it, is, properly speaking, nothing;—and farther on, we have said he is a bungler. This is in the manner of those severe sayings by which philosophers give so much offence. Leaving the present case, to deal directly with the general principle, I have to remind you that a thinker of this sort, without having firmness enough to refuse all respect to truth, seeks to chaffer with her and cheapen something from her, in order by a favourable bargain to obtain some consideration for himself. But Truth, who is once for all what she is, and cannot change her nature in aught, proceeds on her way without turning aside; and there remains nothing for her, with respect to those who do not seek her purely because she is true, but to leave them standing there, just as if they had never accosted her.

Again, it is a common charge against discourses of this kind, that they cannot be understood. Thus I can suppose, not you, gentlemen, but some finished Scholar according to appearance, under whose eye, perhaps, these thoughts may come,—approaching them, and, puzzled and doubtful, at last thoughtfully exclaiming:—The Idea—the Divine Idea, —that which lies at the bottom of all appearance,—what may this mean? I would reply to such an inquirer,—What then may this question mean?—Strictly speaking, it means in most cases nothing more than the following:—Under what other name, and by what other formula, do I already know this same thing which thou expressest by a name so extraordinary, and to me so unheard of?—and to that again, in most cases, the only fitting answer would be,—Thou knowest not this thing at all, and during thy whole life hast understood nothing of it, neither under this nor any other name; and if thou art to come to any knowledge of it, thou must even now begin anew to learn it, and then most fitly under that name by which it is first offered to thee.

In the following lectures the word Idea, which I have used to-day, will be in many respects better defined and explained, and as I hope ultimately brought to perfect clearness; but that is by no means the business of a single hour. We reserve this, as well as everything else to which we have to direct your attention, for the succeeding lectures.

LECTURE II.

FURTHER DEFINITION OF THE MEANING OF THE DIVINE IDEA.

The following were the principles which we laid down in our last lecture as the grounds of our investigation into the nature of the Scholar.

The universe is not, in deed and truth, that which it seems to be to the uncultivated and natural sense of man; but it is something higher, which lies behind mere natural appearance. In its widest sense, this foundation of all appearance may be aptly named the Divine Idea of the world. A certain part of the meaning of this Divine Idea is accessible to, and conceivable by, the cultivated mind.

We said at the close of last lecture, that this notion of a Divine Idea as the ultimate and absolute foundation of all appearance, which as yet remained obscure, would afterwards become quite clear and intelligible, by means of its applications.

Nevertheless we find it desirable, in the first place, to define this Idea more fully in the abstract, and to this purpose we shall devote the present lecture. To this end we lay down the following principles, which so far as we are concerned are indeed the results of deep and methodical investigation, and are perfectly demonstrable in themselves, but which we can here only communicate to you *historically*, calculating with confidence on your own natural sense of truth to confirm our principles without perfect insight into their original source, and also on your observing that by these principles, thus previously laid down, the most important questions are answered, and the most searching doubts solved.

We lay down, then, the following principles :—

1. Being, strictly and absolutely considered, is living and essentially active. There is no other being than Life ;—it cannot be dead, rigid, inert. What death, that constantly recurring phenomenon, really is, and how it is connected with the only true being—with Life,—we shall see more clearly afterwards.

2. The only Life which exists entirely in itself, from itself, and by itself, is the Life of God, or of the Absolute ;—which two words mean one and the same thing; so that when we say the Life *of* the Absolute, we only use a form of expression, since the Absolute is Life, and Life is the Absolute.

3. This Divine Life lies entirely hidden in itself ;—it has its residence within itself, and abides there completely realized in, and accessible only to, itself. It is—all being, and beside it there is no being. It is therefore wholly without change or variation.

4. Now this Divine Life discloses itself, appears, becomes visible, manifests itself as such—as the Divine Life : and this its manifestation, presence, or outward existence, is the world. Strictly speaking, it manifests itself as it essentially and really is and lives, and cannot manifest itself otherwise ; and hence there is no groundless and arbitrary medium interposed between its true and essential nature and its outward manifestation, in consequence of which it is only in part revealed, and in part remains concealed : but its manifestation, *i. e.* the world, is fashioned and unchangeably determined by two conditions only ; viz., by the essential nature of the Divine Life itself, and by the unvarying and absolute laws of any revelation or manifestation ab-

stractly considered. God reveals himself as God can reveal himself: His whole (in itself essentially inconceivable) being comes forth undivided and unreservedly, in so far as it can come forth in any mere manifestation.

5. The Divine Life in itself is absolute, self-comprehending unity, without change or variableness, as we said above. In its manifestation, for a reason which is quite conceivable although not here set forth, it becomes a self-developing existence, gradually and eternally unfolding itself, and constantly progressing onward in the ever-flowing stream of time. In the first place, it continues in this manifestation, as we said, to be life. The living cannot be manifested in the dead, for the two are altogether opposed to each other; and hence, as Absolute Being alone is life, so the only true and peculiar manifestation of that being is Living Existence, and death has neither an absolute, nor, in the highest sense of the word, has it even a relative existence. This living manifestation we call the human race. The human race is thus the only true finite existence. As being—absolute being—constitutes the Divine Life, and is wholly exhausted therein, so does Existence in Time, or the manifestation of that Divine Life, constitute the whole united life of mankind, and is thoroughly and entirely exhausted therein. Thus, in its manifestation the Divine Life becomes a continually progressive existence, unfolding itself in perpetual growth according to the degree of inward activity and power which belongs to it. Hence,—and the consequence is an important one—hence the manifestation of life in time, unlike the Divine Life, is limited at every point of its existence,—*i. e.* it is in part not living, not yet interpenetrated by life, but in so far—dead. These limitations it shall gradually break through, lay aside, and alter into life, by its increasing growth.

In this idea of the obstructions which surround Existence in Time, we have, when it is thoroughly seized and pondered over, the idea of the objective and material world, or what we call Nature. This is not living and capable of infinite growth like Reason, but dead—a rigid, self-inclosed existence. It is this which, arresting and hemming in the Time-Life, by this hindrance alone spreads over a longer or shorter period of time that which would otherwise burst forth at once, a perfect and complete life. Further, in the development of spiritual existence, Nature itself is interpenetrated by life; and is thus both the obstacle to, and the sphere of, that activity and outward expression of power in which human life eternally unfolds itself.

This, and absolutely nothing more than this, is Nature in the most extended meaning of the word; and even man himself, inasmuch as his existence is limited in comparison with the original and Divine Life, is nothing more than this. Since the perpetual advancement of this second life—not original, but derived and human,—and also its finitude and limitation in order that such advancement may be so much as possible,—both proceed from the self-manifestation of the Absolute, so Nature also has its foundation in God—not indeed as something that is and ought to be for its own sake alone, but only as the means and condition of another being—of the Living Being in man,—and as something which shall be gradually and unceasingly superseded and displaced by the perpetual advancement of this being. Hence we should not be blinded or led astray by a philosophy assuming the name of *natural*,* which pretends to excel all former philosophy by striving to elevate Nature into absolute being, and into the place of God. In all ages, the theoretical errors as well as the moral corruptions of humanity have arisen from falsely bestowing the name of life on that which in itself possesses neither absolute nor even finite being, and seeking for life and its enjoyments in that which in itself is dead. Very far therefore from being a step towards truth, that philosophy is only a return to old and already most widely spread error.

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* Schelling's "Natur-Philosophie" is here referred to.

6. The truth contained in the principles which we have now laid down may be conceived of by man, who himself is the manifestation of the original and Divine Life, *in a general way*, as we, for example, have now looked upon it,—either through rational conviction, or only from being led to it by an obscure feeling or sense of truth, or from finding it probable because it furnishes a complete solution of the most important problems. Man may perceive it; that is, the manifestation can fall back on its original, and picture it forth in reflection with absolute certainty as to the fact; but it can by no means analyze and comprehend it fully, for the manifestation ever remains only a manifestation, and can never go beyond itself and return to absolute being.

7. We have said that man may perceive this in so far as regards the fact, but he cannot perceive the reason and origin of the fact. *How* and *why* from the one Divine Life, this and no other Time-Life arises and constantly flows forth, can only be understood by man on condition of fully comprehending all the parts of this latter, and explaining them all, one by the other, mutually and completely, so as to reduce them once more to a single idea, and that idea equivalent to the one Divine Life. But this forth-flowing Time-Life is endless, and the comprehension of its parts can thus never be completed: besides, the comprehender is himself a portion of it, and at every conceivable point of time he himself stands chained in the finite and limited, which he can never entirely throw off without ceasing to be manifestation,—without being himself transformed into the Divine Life.

8. From this it seems to follow, that the Time-Life can only be comprehended by thought *as a whole*, and according to its general nature—*i. e.* as we have endeavoured to comprehend it above,—and then as a manifestation of the one original and Divine Life;—but that *in its details* it must be immediately felt and experienced in their individual import, and can only by and through this experience be imaged forth in thought and consciousness. And such is actually

the case in a certain respect and with a certain portion of human life. Throughout all time, and in every individual part of it, there remains in human life something which does not entirely reveal itself in idea, and which cannot therefore be anticipated or superseded by any idea, but which must be directly felt if it is ever to attain a place in consciousness;—and this is called the domain of pure empiricism or experience. The above-mentioned philosophy errs in this, that it pretends to have resolved the entire human life into idea, and thus wholly superseded experience; instead of which, it defeats its own purpose, and in attempting to explain life completely, loses sight of it altogether.

9. I said that such was the case with the Time-Life *in a certain respect and with a certain portion of it.* For in another respect and with another portion of it, the case is quite otherwise,—and that on the following ground, which I shall here only indicate in popular phraseology, but which is well worthy of deeper investigation.

The Time-Life does not enter into time in individual parts only, but also in entire homogeneous masses; and it is these masses, again, which divide themselves into the individual parts of actual life. There is not only *time,* but there are *times,* and succession of times, epoch after epoch, and age succeeding age. Thus, for example, to the deeper thought of man, the entire earthly life of the human race, as it now exists, is such a homogeneous mass, projected at once into time, and ever present there, whole and undivided—only in appearance spread out into world-history. As soon as these homogeneous masses have appeared in time, the general laws and rules by which they are governed may be comprehended, and, in their relation to the whole course of these masses, anticipated and understood; while the obstacles over which these masses must take their way—that is, the hindrances and interruptions of life—are only accessible to immediate experience.

10. These cognizable laws of homogeneous masses of life,

which may be perceived and understood prior to their actual consequences, must necessarily appear as laws of life itself, as it ought to be and as it should strive to become, founded on the self-supporting and independent principle of this Time-Life, which must here appear as Freedom:—hence *as laws for the free action and conduct of the living being.* If we go back to the source of this legislation, we shall find that it lies in the Divine Life itself, which could not reveal itself in time otherwise than under this form of a law; and, indeed, as is implied in the preceding ideas, nowise as a law ruling with blind power and extorting obedience by force, such as we assume in passive and inanimate nature,—but as a law for a life which is conscious of its own independence, and cannot be deprived of it, without at the same tearing up the very root of its being;—hence, as we said above, as a Divine Law of Freedom, or Moral Law.

Further, as we have already seen, this life, according to the law of the original Divine Life, is the only true life and source of all other;—all things else besides this life are but hindrances and obstructions thereto, only possessing existence that by them the true life may be unfolded and manifested in its strength: hence all things else have no existence for their own sakes, but only as means for the development of the true life. Reason can only comprehend the connexion between means and end, by supposing a mind in which the end has been determined. A thoroughly moral Human Life has its source in God: by analogy with our own reason, we conceive of God as proposing to himself the moral life of man as the sole purpose for which he has manifested himself and called into existence every other thing; not that it *is* absolutely thus as we conceive of it, and that God really *thinks* like man, and that Being itself is in him distinguished from the Conception of Being,—but *we* only think thus, because we are unable otherwise to comprehend the relation between the Divine and the Human Life. And in this absolutely necessary mode of thought, Human Life *as it ought* *to be* becomes the idea and fundamental conception of God in the creation of a world,—the purpose and the plan which God intended to fulfil by the creation of the world.

And thus is sufficiently explained for our present purpose how the Divine Idea lies at the foundation of the visible world, and how, and how far, this Idea, hidden from the common eye, may become conceivable and attainable by cultivated thought, and necessarily appear to it as that which man by his free activity *should* manifest in the world.

This *should*—this free act of man—must not be forthwith restricted to the familiar categorical imperative, and to the narrow and paltry applications of it which are given in our common systems of morality,—such applications as must necessarily be made by such a science. Almost invariably, and that for causes well founded in the laws of philosophical abstraction through which systems of morality are produced, it has been usual to dwell at greatest length on the mere *form* of morality—to inculcate simply and solely obedience to the commandment;—and even when our moralists have proceeded to its *substance*, still their chief aim seems to have been rather to induce men to cease from doing evil, than to persuade them to do good. Indeed, in any *system* of human duties, it is necessary to maintain such a generality of expression that the rules may be equally applicable to all men, and for this reason to point out more clearly what man ought not to do, than what he ought to do. This, too, is the Divine Idea,—but only in its remote and borrowed shape—not in its fresh originality. The original Divine Idea of any particular point of time remains for the most part unexpressed, until the God-inspired man appears and declares it. What the Divine Man does, that is divine. In general, the original and pure Divine Idea—that which he who is immediately inspired of God should do and actually does—is (with reference to the visible world) creative, producing the new, the unheard-of, the original. The impulse of mere natural existence leads us to abide in the old, and even when the Divine Idea is associated with it, it aims at the maintenance of whatever has hitherto seemed good, or at most to petty improvements upon it; but where the Divine Idea attains an existence pure from the admixture of natural impulse, there it builds new worlds upon the ruins of the old. All things new, great, and beautiful, which have appeared in the world since its beginning, and those which will appear until its end, have appeared and will appear through the Divine Idea, partially expressed in the chosen ones of our race.

And thus, as the life of man is the only immediate implement and organ of the Divine Idea in the visible world, so is it also the first and immediate object of its activity. The moral training of the human race is the object of the Divine Idea, and of those in whom that Idea dwells. This last view makes it possible for us to separate the Divine Idea into its various modes of action, or to conceive of the one indivisible Idea as several.

First,—In the actual world, the life of man, which is in truth essentially one and indivisible, is divided into the life of many proximate individuals, each of whom possesses freedom and independence. This division of the one Living Existence is an arrangement of nature, and hence is a hindrance or obstruction to the true life,—and only exists in order that through it, and in conflict with it, that unity of life which is demanded by the Divine Idea may *freely* fashion itself:—human life has been divided by nature into many parts, in order that it may form *itself* to unity, and that all the separate individuals who compose it may through life itself blend themselves together in oneness of mind. In the original state of nature, the various wills of these individuals, and the different powers which they call into play, mutually oppose and hinder each other. It is not so in the Divine Idea, and it shall not continue so in the visible world. The first interposing power (not founded in nature but subsequently introduced into the world by a new creation) on which this strife of individual powers breaks and expends itself until it entirely disappears in a general morality, is the founding of States, and of just relations between them; in short, all those institutions by which individual powers, single or united, have each their proper sphere assigned to them, to which they are confined, but in which at the same time they are secured against all foreign aggression. This institution lay in the Divine Idea; it was introduced into the world by inspired men, in their efforts for the realization of the Divine Idea; by these efforts it will be maintained in the world, and constantly improved until it shall attain perfection.

Secondly,—This race of men, thus raising itself through internal strife to internal unity, is surrounded by an inert and passive Nature, by which its free life is always hindered, threatened, and confined. So it must be, in order that this life may win freedom by its own free effort; and according to the Divine Idea, this strength, and independence of the sensual life, shall gradually unfold itself. To that end it is necessary that the powers of Nature be subjected to human purpose, and (in order that this subjection may be possible) that man should be acquainted with the laws by which these powers work, and be able to calculate beforehand the course of their operation. Moreover, Nature is not designed merely to be useful and profitable to man, but also to become his fitting companion, bearing the impress of his higher dignity, and reflecting it in radiant characters on every side. This dominion over Nature lies in the Divine Idea, and is ceaselessly extended by the power of that Idea through the agency of all in whom it dwells.

Lastly,—Man is not placed in the world of sense alone, but the essential root of his being is, as we have seen, in God. Hurried along by sense and its impulses, the consciousness of this Life in God may be readily hidden from him, and then, however noble may be his nature, he lives in strife and disunion with himself, in discord and unhappiness, without true dignity and enjoyment of life. But when the consciousness of the true source of his existence first rises upon him, and he joyfully resigns himself to it till his being is steeped in the thought, then peace and joy and blessedness flow in upon his soul. And it lies in the Divine Idea that all men must come to this gladdening consciousness—that the outward and tasteless Finite Life may be pervaded by the Infinite, and so enjoyed; and to this end all who have been filled with the Divine Idea have laboured and shall still labour, that this consciousness in its purest possible form may be spread throughout the race of man.

The modes of activity which we have indicated,—LEGISLATION—SCIENCE (knowledge of nature—power over nature)—RELIGION,—are those in which the Divine Idea most commonly reveals and manifests itself through man in the world of sense. It is obvious that each of these chief branches has also its separate parts, in each of which, individually, the Idea may be revealed. Add to these the KNOWLEDGE of the Divine Idea—knowledge that there is such a Divine Idea, as well as knowledge of its import, either in whole or in some of its parts—and further, the ART or SKILL actually to exhibit to the world the Idea which is thus clearly seen and understood,—both of which, however—Knowledge and Art—can only be acquired through the immediate impulse of the Divine Idea,—and then we have the *five* great modes in which the Idea reveals itself in man. That mode of culture, then, by which, in the view of any age, a man may attain to the possession of this Idea or these Ideas, we have named the *learned culture* of that age; and those who, by this culture, do actually attain the desired possession, we have named the *Scholars* of the age;—and from what we have said to-day you will be able more easily to recognize the truth of this statement, to refer back to it the different branches of knowledge recognized among men, or to deduce them from it; and thus test our principle by its applications.

LECTURE III.

OF THE PROGRESSIVE SCHOLAR IN GENERAL; AND IN PARTICULAR OF GENIUS AND INDUSTRY.

THE Divine Idea, by its own inherent power, creates for itself an independent and personal life in man, constantly maintains itself in this life, and by means of it moulds the outward world in its own image. The natural man cannot, by his own power, raise himself to the *supernatural;* he must be raised thereto *by* the power of the *supernatural.* This self-forming and self-supporting life of the Idea in man manifests itself as Love;—strictly speaking, as love of the Idea for itself; but, in the language of common appearance, as love of man for the Idea. This was set forth in our first lecture.

So it is with love in general; and it is not otherwise with the love of the knowledge of the Idea in particular, which knowledge the Scholar is called upon to acquire. The love of the Idea absolutely for itself, and particularly for its essential light, shows itself in those men whom it has inspired, and of whose being it has fully possessed itself as *knowledge* of the Idea,—in the mature Scholar, with a well-defined and perfect clearness—in the progressive Scholar, as a striving towards such a degree of clearness as it can attain under the circumstances in which he is placed. Following out the plan laid down in the opening lecture, we shall speak, in the first place, of the progressive Scholar.

The Idea strives, in the first place, to assume a definite form within him, and to establish for itself a fixed place amid the tide of manifold images which flows in ceaseless change over his soul. In this effort he is seized with a presentiment of a truth still unknown to him, of which he has as yet no clear conception; he feels that every new acquisition which he makes is still not the full and perfect truth, without being able to state distinctly in what it is deficient, or how the fulness of knowledge which is to take its place can be attained or brought about. This effort of the Idea within him becomes henceforward his essential life—the highest and deepest impulse of his being,—superseding his hitherto sensual and egoistical impulse, which was only directed towards the maintenance of his personal existence and physical well-being, subjecting this latter to itself, and thereby for ever extinguishing it as the one and fundamental impulse of his nature. Actual personal want does still, as hitherto, demand its satisfaction; but that satisfaction does not continue, as it has hitherto continued, even when its present demands have been supplied, to be the engrossing thought, the ever-present object of contemplation, the motive to all the conduct and action of the thinking being. As sensual nature has hitherto asserted its rights, so will emancipated thought, armed with new power, in its own strength, and without outward compulsion or ulterior design, return from the strange land into which it has been carried captive, to its own proper home, and betake itself to the path which leads toward that much wished-for *Unknown*, whose light streams upon it from afar. Towards that unknown it is unceasingly attracted; in meditating upon it—in striving after it, it will employ its best spiritual power.

This impulse towards an obscure, imperfectly discerned spiritual object, is commonly named Genius;—and it is so named on good grounds. It is a *supernatural* instinct in man attracting him to a *supernatural* object, thus indicating his relationship to the spiritual world, and his original home in that world. Whether we suppose that this impulse, which, absolutely considered, should prompt to the pursuit of the Divine Idea in its primitive unity and indivisibility, does originally, and at the first appearance of any individual in the world of sense, so shape itself, that this individual can only lay hold of the Idea at one particular point of contact, and only from that point penetrate gradually to the other parts of the spiritual universe;—or whether we hold that this peculiar point of contact for the individual only comes into existence during the first development of individual power on the manifold materials which are offered to it, and always occurs in that material which chance presents at the precise moment when the power is sufficiently developed;—which of these opinions soever we adopt, still, in appearance, the impulse which shows itself in man and urges him onward, will always manifest itself as an impulse towards some particular side of the one, indivisible Idea; or, as we may express it, after the investigations of our last lecture, without fear of being misunderstood,—as an impulse towards one particular idea in the sphere of all possible ideas; or if we give to this impulse the name of Genius, then Genius will always appear as a *specific* Genius for philosophy, poetry, natural science, legislation, or the like,—never clothed with an *absolute* character, as Genius in the abstract. According to the first opinion, this specific Genius possesses its distinguishing character as an innate peculiarity; according to the second, it is originally universal Genius, which is only determined to a particular province by accident of cultivation. The decision of this controversy lies beyond the limits of our present task.

In whatever way it is decided, two things are evident:—*in general*, the necessity of previous spiritual culture, and of preliminary instruction in the management and ordering of ideas and knowledge, so that Genius, if present, may disclose itself; and, *in particular*, the necessity of bringing within the reach of every man, ideas of many different kinds, so that either the inborn *specific* Genius may come into contact with its appropriate material, or the originally *universal* Genius may freely choose one particular object from among the many. Even in this preliminary spiritual culture, future Genius reveals itself; for its earliest impulse is directed towards knowledge only as knowledge—merely for the sake of knowing;—and thus shows itself solely as a desire to know.

But even when this impulse has visibly manifested itself, either in the active investigation of this attractive problem or in happy anticipations of its solution, still persevering industry, uninterrupted labour, are imperatively requisite. The question has often been raised, whether Genius or Industry is most essential in science. I answer, both must be united: the one is but little worth without the other. Genius is nothing more than the effort of the Idea to assume a definite form. The Idea, however, has in itself neither body nor substance, but only shapes itself an embodiment out of the scientific materials which environ it in Time, of which Industry is the sole purveyor. On the other hand, Industry can do nothing more than provide the elements of this embodiment;—to unite them organically, and to breathe into them a living spirit, is not the work of Industry, but belongs only to the Idea revealing itself as Genius. To impress its image on the surrounding world is the object for which the living Idea dwelling in the true Scholar seeks for itself an embodiment. It is to become the highest life-principle, the inmost soul of the world around it;—it must therefore assume the same forms which are borne by the surrounding world, establish itself in these forms as its own proper dwelling-place, and with a free authority regulate the movements of all their individual parts according to the natural purposes of each, even as a healthy man can set in motion his own limbs. As for him with whom the indwelling Genius proceeds but half-way in its embodiment, and stops there, whether it be because the paths of learned culture are inaccessible to him, or because, from idleness or presumptuous self-conceit, he disdains to avail himself of them,—between him and his age, and consequently between him and every possible age, and the whole human race in every point of its progress,—an impassable gulf is fixed, and the means of mutual influence are cut off. Whatever may now dwell within him, or, more strictly speaking, whatever he *might have* acquired in the course of his progressive culture, he is unable to explain clearly either to himself or others, or to make it the deliberate rule of his actions, and thus realize it in the world. He wants the two necessary elements of the true life of the Idea—clearness and freedom. *Clearness;*—his fundamental principle not being thoroughly distinct to his own mind, he cannot follow it in its course, and keep it in view through all its modifications, from its inmost source where it is poured down immediately from the Divinity upon his soul, to all those points at which it has to manifest and embody itself in the visible world, and through all the different forms which, under every possible condition, it must assume. *Freedom;*—which springs from clearness, and can never exist without it: for he cannot perceive at a glance the form which the Idea must assume in every phase of reality which presents itself, nor the proper means to the attainment of that object;—nor has he those means at his free disposal. He is commonly called a *visionary,*—and he is rightly so called. On the contrary, he in whom the Idea perfectly reveals itself, looks out from it as his peculiar point of view, upon all reality, and thoroughly penetrates the nature of outward things by the light of the Idea. Through the Idea itself he understands all its relative objects,—how they have become what they are, what in them is complete, what is still awanting, and how the want must be supplied; and he has, besides, the means of supplying that want completely in his power. The embodiment of the Idea is then for the first time completed in him, and he is a matured Scholar;—the point where the Scholar passes into the free

Artist is the point of perfection for the former. Hence it is evident that even when Genius has shown itself, and visibly become a self-forming life of the Idea, untiring Industry is necessary for its perfect growth. To show that at the point where the Scholar reaches perfection, the creative existence of the Artist begins, that this, too, requires Industry, that it is infinite,—lies not within our present inquiry;—we only allude to it in passing.

But what did I say?—that even after the manifestation of Genius, Industry is requisite?—as if I would call forth Industry by my prescription, my advice, my demonstration of its necessity, and thus expected to rouse to exertion those in whom it is wanting? Rather let us say, that where Genius is really present, Industry spontaneously appears, grows with a steady growth, and ceaselessly impels the advancing Scholar on towards perfection;—where, on the contrary, Industry is not to be found, it is not Genius nor the impulse of the Idea which has shown itself, but, in place of it, only some very mean and unworthy motive.

The Idea is not the ornament of an individual (for individuality, strictly speaking, is no part of the Idea), but it seeks to flow forth in the whole human race, to animate it with new life, and to mould it after its own image. This is the distinctive character of the Idea; and whatever is without this character is not the Idea. Wherever, therefore, it attains an existence, it irresistibly strives after this universal activity, not through the life of the individual, but through its own essential life. It thus impels every one in whom it has an abode, against the will and wish of his sensual, personal nature, as though he were a passive instrument, forward to this universal activity—to the skill which is demanded in its exercise, and to the Industry which is necessary for the acquisition of that skill. It never ceases from spontaneous activity and self-development, feeling no need of outward incentive thereto, until it has attained such a living and efficient form as it is possible for it to attain under

these conditions. Wherever a man, having availed himself of the existing and accessible means for the acquirement of learned culture—(for the second case, where those means do not exist, or are inaccessible, does not belong to our present subject)—wherever, I say, in the first case, a man remains inactive—satisfied with the persuasion that he is in possession of something resembling the Idea or Genius,—then in him there is neither Idea nor Genius, but only a vain ostentatious disposition, which assumes a singular and fantastic costume in order to attract the attention of other men. Such a disposition shows itself at once, in self-gratulatory contemplation of its own parts and endowments, dwelling on these in complacent indolence, commonly accompanied by contemptuous disparagement of the personal qualities and gifts of others; while, on the contrary, he who is restlessly urged on by the Idea has no time left to think of his own person;—lost with all his powers in the object he has in view, he never weighs his own capacities of grasping it against those of others. Genius, where it is present, sees its object only—never sees itself;—as the sound eye fixes itself upon something beyond it, but never looks round ?
upon its own brightness. In such an one, the Idea does certainly not abide. What is it, then, that animates him—that moves him to those eager and active exertions which we behold? It is intense pride and self-conceit, and the desperate purpose, in spite of nature, to assume a character which does not belong to him;—these animate, impel, and spur him on, and stand to him in the room of Genius. And what is it which he produces, which appears to the common eye (itself indeed neither clear nor pure, and in particular incapable of appreciating the sole criteria of all true ideals—clearness, freedom, depth, artistic form) as if it were the Idea?—what is it? Either something which he has himself invented, or which has occurred to him by accident, which, indeed, he does not understand, but nevertheless hopes that it may appear new, striking, paradoxical, and therefore blaze

forth far and wide;—with this he commits himself to the chance of fortune, trusting that in the sequel he himself or some one else may discover a meaning therein. Or else he has borrowed it from others—cunningly distorting, disarranging, and unsettling it, so that its original form cannot easily be recognized; and by way of precaution depreciating the source whence it came, as utterly barren and unprofitable, lest the unprejudiced observer might be led to inquire whether he has not possibly obtained from thence, that which he calls his own.

In one word,—self-contemplation, self-admiration, and self-flattery, though the last may remain unexpressed, and even carefully shrouded from the eye of every beholder,—these, and the indolence and disdain of the treasures already gathered together in the storehouses of learning which spring from these, are sure signs of the absence of true Genius; while forgetfulness of self in the object pursued, entire devotion to that object, and inability to entertain any thought of self in its presence, are the inseparable accompaniments of true Genius. It follows that true Genius in every stage of its growth, but particularly during its early development, is marked by amiable modesty and retiring bashfulness. Genius knows least of all about itself; it is there, and works and rules with silent power long before it comes to consciousness of its own nature. Whoever is constantly looking back upon himself, to see how it stands with him, and of what powers he can boast, and who is himself the first discoverer of these,—in him truly there is nothing great.

Should there then be here among us any opening Genius, far be it from me to wound its native modesty and diffidence by any general invitation to you to examine yourselves, and see whether or not you are in possession of the Idea;—I would much rather earnestly dissuade you from such self-examination. And that this advice may not seem to you the suggestion of mere pedantic school-wisdom, and perhaps of extravagant caution, but may approve itself to your minds as arising from absolute necessity, I would add, that this question can neither be answered by yourselves, nor can you obtain any sure answer to it from any one else; that therefore truth is not elicited by such a premeditated self-examination, but, on the contrary, youth is taught that self-contemplation and conceited brooding over his own nature, through which the man becomes at length an intellectual and moral ruin. There are many signs by which we may know that the Genius which possibly lies concealed in a Student has not yet declared itself,—and we shall afterwards find occasion in the sequel to point out the most remarkable of these;—but there is only one decisive criterion by which we may determine whether Genius has existed or has never existed in him; and that one decisive criterion can only be applied after the result has become apparent. Whoever has really become a perfect Scholar and Artist, in the sense in which we have used these words—grasping the world in his clear, penetrating Idea, and able to impress that Idea upon the world at every point;—he has had Genius, he has been inspired by the Idea; and this may now confidently be said of him:—he who, notwithstanding the most diligent study, has come to maturity without having raised himself to the Idea,—he has been without Genius, without communion with the Idea; and this may henceforward be said of him:—but of him who is still upon the way, neither of these judgments can be pronounced.

This disposition of things, which is as wise as it is necessary, leaves but one course open to the youthful student, who cannot know with certainty whether or not Genius dwells within him,—this, namely, that he continue to act as though there were resident within him that which must at last come to light; that he subject himself to all the conditions, and place himself in all circumstances, in which, if present, it may come to light; that, with untiring Industry and true devotion of his whole mind, he avail himself of all the means which learned culture offers to him. In the worst case,—if at the termination of his studies he finds that out of the mass of learning which he has accumulated not one spark of the Idea has beamed upon him, there yet remains for him, at least, a consciousness which is more indispensable to man than even Genius itself, and without which the possessor of the greatest Genius is far less worthy than he,—the consciousness that if he has not risen higher no blame can attach itself to him—that the point at which he has stopped short is the place which God has assigned to him, whose law he will joyfully obey. No one need pride himself upon Genius, for it is the free gift of God; but of honest Industry and true devotion to his destiny any man may well be proud; indeed this thorough integrity of purpose is itself the Divine Idea in its most common form, and no really honest mind is without communion with God.

The knowledge which he has acquired by means of this sincere effort after something higher, will render him always a suitable instrument in the hands of the more perfect Scholar,—of him who has attained possession of the Idea. To him he will unhesitatingly submit without grudge or jealousy—without any unsatisfied struggle after an elevation for which he was not formed; his guidance he will follow with a true loyalty which shall have become to him a second nature, and thus he will obtain a sure consciousness of having fulfilled his vocation, as the last and highest destiny to which, in any sphere of life, man can attain.

LECTURE IV.

OF INTEGRITY IN STUDY.

He who is to become a true Scholar, so that in him the Divine Idea of the world may attain to such a measure of clearness, and influence over the surrounding world, as is possible in his circumstances, must be laid hold of by the Idea itself through its own inherent power, and by it urged forward unceasingly towards the wished-for end.

In our portraiture of the true Scholar, we are now engaged with the advancing Scholar, or the Student.

If the Student be really inspired by the Idea,—or, what is the same thing, if he possess Genius and true talent,—he is already far above all our counsels; Genius will fulfil its vocation in him without our aid, and even without his own concurrence:—of this we have spoken sufficiently in our last lecture.

But, as we have likewise seen in the same lecture, the advancing Scholar can never determine for himself whether or not he possess Genius in our sense of the term, nor can any one else determine it for him:—hence there is nothing left for him, but with sincere and perfect Integrity so to act, as if Genius, which must ultimately come to light, lay now concealed within him. True Genius, when present, manifests itself precisely in the same way as does this Integrity in Study; in appearance, both assume the same form, and cannot be distinguished the one from the other.

Turning away from the tests of Genius which, in the advancing Scholar at least, are inscrutable, we have now only to exhaust the indications of Integrity in Study, and we shall then have completed the portraiture of the true follower of learning. The honest Scholar is to us the only true Scholar: the two ideas flow into each other.

Integrity in the abstract, as we have also remarked before, is itself a Divine Idea; it is the Divine Idea in its most general form, embracing all men. Hence, like the Idea itself, it acts by its own inherent power;—it forms itself, as we said before of Genius, without aid from the personal feeling of the individual,—nay, annihilating his self-love as far as possible—into an independent life in man, irresistibly urging him forward, and pervading all his thoughts and actions. His actions, I say; for the idea of Integrity is an immediately practical idea, determining the outward, visible, free doings of man;—whereas the influence of Genius is, in the first place, internal,—affecting spiritual insight. He who truly possesses Genius *must be* successful in his studies: to him light and knowledge will spring up on all sides from the objects of his contemplation. He who possesses Integrity in Study, of him this success cannot be so surely predicted; but should it not follow, he, at least, will not be blameworthy, for he will neglect nothing within his power which may enable him to attain it; and even if he be not at last a sharer in the triumph, he shall at least have deserved to be so.

Integrity, as a living and governing principle, rises above the person of him who is animated by it, and regards this person as standing under a definite law—as existing only for a certain purpose, and as a means to a higher end. Man shall *be* and *do* something; his temporal life shall leave behind it in the spiritual world an imperishable and eternal result—a particular result arising from the life of each individual, belonging to him alone and demanded of him alone. It is thus that the true-minded man looks upon all personal

Life in Time, and particularly on that life which lies nearest to him—namely, his own. He in whom this Integrity has become a living idea cannot conceive of human life in any other way than this;—from this principle he sets forth, to it he constantly returns, and by it he regulates all his other modes of thought. Only in so far as he obeys this law and fulfils this purpose, which he recognizes as his being's end and aim, is he satisfied with himself: everything in him which is not directed to this high end—which is not evidently a means to its attainment, he despises, hates, desires to have swept away. He looks upon his individual person as a thought of the Deity; and thus his vocation—the design of his being—is to him as a purpose of God himself. This, and nothing else, is the *idea* of Integrity,—whether he who is ruled by it calls it by this *name* or by another.

Success cannot indeed be certainly predicted of mere Integrity as such, either in study or in any other purpose which it may propose to itself; but in all its pursuits it will surely display the independent power of the Idea pressing steadily forward to its mark; and of the true-minded man it may confidently be said, that in Integrity itself, his defence and support, he will find a noble reward. In advancing on the path of rectitude, it will become continually less needful for him to admonish—to arouse himself to the struggle against recurring evil desires; for the true feeling, the legitimate mode of thought, will spontaneously reveal itself to him, and become his ruling principle—his second nature. Whatever thou doest, do it with Integrity: if thou studiest, let it guide thy studies; and then, as to whether thou shalt prosper in what thou doest,—leave that to God: thou hast most surely left it to him, when thou goest to work with true and honest purpose;—with the attainment of that Integrity thou wilt also attain unbroken peace, inward cheerfulness, and an unstained conscience; and in so far thou wilt assuredly prosper.

We have said that the honest man *in general* looks upon his free personal life as unalterably determined by the eternal thought of God;—the honest student *in particular* looks upon himself as designed by the thought of God to this end, *i. e.* that the Divine Idea of the constitution of the world may enter his soul, shine in him with steady lustre, and through him maintain a definite influence on the surrounding world. Thus does he conceive of his vocation; for in this lies the nature of the Scholar:—so surely as he has entered upon his studies with Integrity—*i. e.* with the persuasion that God has given a purpose to his life, and that he must direct all his free actions towards the fulfilment of that purpose—so surely has he made the supposition that it is the Divine Will that he should become a Scholar. It matters not whether we have chosen this condition for ourselves with freedom and foresight, or others have chosen it for us, placed us in the way of preparation for it, and closed every other condition of life against us. How could any one, at the early age at which this choice of a condition usually occurs, and in most cases must occur, be possessed of the mature wisdom by which to decide for himself whether or not he is possessed of the as yet untried and undeveloped capacity for knowledge? When we come to the exercise of our own understanding, the choice of a condition is already made,—it has been made without our aid, because we were incapable at the time of rendering any aid in the matter; and now we cannot turn back,—a necessity precisely similar to the unalterable conditions under which our freedom is placed by the Divine Will. If an error should occur in the choice thus made for us by others, the fault is not ours; we could not decide whether or not an error had been committed, and could not venture to presuppose one: if it has occurred, then it is our business, so far as in us lies, to correct it. In any case, it is the Divine Will that every one, in the station where he has been placed by necessity, should do all things which properly belong to that station. *We* have met together to *study;* hence it is assuredly the Divine Will that we consider ourselves as Students, and apply to ourselves all that is comprehended in that idea.

This thought, with its indestructible certainty, enters and fills the soul of every honest Student:—this, namely—'I, this sent, this expressly commissioned individual as I may now call myself, am actually here—have entered into existence for this cause and no other,—that the eternal counsel of God in this universe may through me be seen of men in another, hitherto unknown light,—be made clearly manifest, and shine forth with inextinguishable lustre over the world; and this phase of the Divine Thought, thus bound up with my person, is the only true living being within me; all else, though looked upon even by myself as belonging to my being, is dream, shadow, nothing;—this alone is imperishable and eternal within me; all else will again disappear in the void from which it has seemingly, but never really, come forth.' This thought fills his whole soul: whether or not it be clearly conceived and expressed itself, everything else which is there clearly conceived, expressed, wished, or willed, is referred back to it as to its first condition, can only be explained by it, and only considered possible on the supposition of its truth.

Through this fundamental principle of all his thoughts, he himself, and knowledge, the object of his activity, become to him, before all other things, honourable and holy. *He himself becomes honourable and holy.* Not by any means that he dwells with self-complacent pride on the superiority of his vocation—to share in some degree the counsel of God and reveal it to the world—over other less distinguished callings, invidiously weighing them against each other, and thus esteeming himself as of more value than other men. If one form of human destiny appears to us superior to another, it is not because it offers a better field for personal distinction, but because in it the Divine Idea reveals itself with greater clearness. The individual man has no peculiar value beyond that of faithfully fulfilling his vocation, whatever that may be; and of this all can partake, irrespective of the different natures of their callings. Moreover, the advancing Scholar does not even know whether he shall attain the proper end of his studies, the possession of the Idea; nor, therefore, if that noble vocation be really his;—he is only bound to suppose the possibility of it. The perfect Scholar—of whom we do not now speak—when he has the completed result in his possession, can then indeed with certainty know his vocation; but even in him the cravings of the Idea for progressive manifestation still continue, and shall continue while life endures, so that he shall never have time to muse over the superiority of his vocation, even were such musings not utterly vain in themselves. All pride is founded on what we think *we are*—*are* in settled and perfect being; and thus pride is in itself vain and contradictory, —for that which is our true being—that to which endless growth belongs—is precisely that to which we have not yet attained. Our true and underived being in the Divine Idea always shows itself as a desire of progress, hence as dissatisfaction with our present state; and thus the Idea makes us truly modest, and bows us down to the dust before its majesty. By his pride itself, the proud man shows that, more than any one else, he has need of humility, for while he thinks of himself that he is something, he shows by his pride that he is really—nothing.

Hence, in the thought to which we gave utterance, the Student is holy and honourable to himself above everything else—not in respect of what he *is*, but of what he *should be*, and what he evermore must strive *to become.* The peculiar self-debasement of a man consists in this,—when he makes himself an instrument to a temporary and perishable purpose, and deigns to spend care and labour on something else than the imperishable and eternal. In this view, every man should be honourable and holy to himself,—and so, too, should the Scholar.

To what end, then, Student, dost thou give to knowledge this attention, which, be it great or small, still costs thee some effort,—wherefore concentrate thy thoughts here, when thou wouldst rather let them rove abroad,—wherefore deny thyself so many enjoyments, for which, nevertheless, the appetite is not wanting in thee? Dost thou answer,—That I may not some day come to want;—that I may acquire a sufficient maintenance, a respectable competency, whereby I may satisfy myself with good things;—that my fellow-citizens may respect me, and that I may more easily move them to the fulfilment of my purposes? I ask,—Who then is this *thou*, in whose future nursing and comfort thou art so keenly interested, and for whom thou dost now toil so hard and sacrifice so much? It is as yet quite uncertain whether it ever reach this hoped-for land of self-gratification: but suppose it does so, and even enjoys the pampering thou hast provided for it during a series of years, what will be the end of it all at last? All this nursing will have an end; the pampered body will sink and crumble into a heap of ashes;—and for this wilt thou begin the monotonous, mechanical, often irksome business of life, and even add to its inherent bitterness by deliberating beforehand on the burden which it lays on thee? In such circumstances, I at least, like the Roman, would rather make the last step my first one, and go down this day to the grave, into which sooner or later I must descend. Or dost thou answer thus, more praiseworthily in appearance at least, but not more profoundly:—'I will thereby become useful to my fellow-men and promote their welfare,'?—then I ask, What end will thy usefulness serve? In a few years, of all whom thou desirest to serve, and whom I freely grant thou mayest serve, not one shall remain—not one shall have the least need of thy services any more: thou hast spent thy labour on perishable things;—they disappear, and thou disappearest with them, and a time comes when every trace of thy being shall be utterly effaced. Not so the true Student, who has brought

Integrity with him to his task. "I am," he may say; "but as surely as I am, is my existence a thought of God, for He alone is the fountain of all being, and besides Him is no being. Whatever I am, in and by this thought, I am before all time, and do so remain, independent of all time and change. This will I strive to know—to its fulfilment I will apply all my powers;—then are they employed on what is eternal, and their result shall last for ever. I am eternal, and it is below the dignity of the eternal to waste itself on things that perish."

By the same principle does knowledge, the object of his activity, become honourable to the Student. At his entrance into the world of science, he meets with many things which seem to him strange and unaccountable, insignificant or unseemly; he cannot conceive the grounds of their necessity, nor their place in the great whole of knowledge, which he is yet unable to embrace in one view. How shall the beginner, who must first gather together the different parts,—how shall he see and understand them in the light of the whole, to which he has not yet attained? Whilst one man thoughtlessly neglects and despises whatever is unintelligible to him, and so remains ignorant; while another learns it mechanically, with blind faith, or in the hope that it may prove useful in some business of life,—the true Scholar worthily and nobly welcomes it into the general idea of knowledge which he already possesses. All which comes before him, belongs in every case to the circle of things out of which the Divine Idea is to appear to him, and to the material in which the Eternal Life within him shall reveal itself and assume a definite form. If knowledge appears to those who want both Genius and Integrity, only as a means to the attainment of certain worldly ends, she reveals herself to him who with honest heart consecrates himself to her service, not only in her highest branches which touch closely upon things divine, but down even to her meanest elements, as something originating in, and determined by, the eternal thought of God himself,—originated there expressly for, and in relation to, him, and destined to be perfected by its action upon him, and, through him, upon the whole eternal universe.

And so does his own person ever become holier to him through the holiness of knowledge, and knowledge again holier through the holiness of his person. His whole life, however unimportant it may outwardly seem, has acquired an inward meaning—a new significance. Whatever may or may not flow from it, it is still a godlike life. And in order to become a partaker in this life, neither the Student of science nor the follower of any other human pursuit needs peculiar talents, but only a living and active Integrity of purpose, to which the thought of our high vocation and our allegiance to an eternal law, with all that flows from these, will be spontaneously revealed.

LECTURE V.

HOW THE INTEGRITY OF THE STUDENT SHOWS ITSELF.

The lectures which I now resume have been begun under many unfavourable circumstances. In the first place, I have had to contemplate my subject from a point of view much higher than the common one—from an elevation to which every Student may not have been prepared to rise. A newly installed teacher in a University cannot be well acquainted with the extent to which scientific culture has hitherto been introduced into the public course; and yet it is naturally expected that he should employ the same means towards such a culture which have already been long in use. But could I have known, even to certainty, that the public as a whole were not sufficiently prepared for such views, yet I must have treated my subject precisely in the way in which I have treated it, or else have never touched it at all. No man should linger about the surface of a thought, and repeat in another form what has been said an hundred times before: he who can do no more than this, had better be silent altogether; but he who can do otherwise, will never hesitate to do so. Further, the individual parts of what is in itself a systematic whole, have been necessarily broken up by intervals of weeks; and time forbade me, in these lectures, strictly to observe the practice which I have generally adopted in all purely philosophical instruction,—*i. e.* before every new lecture to recapitulate the previous one in its connection with the subject at large, and thus conduct the hearer once more over all that has gone before, and enable him again to grasp the spirit of the whole. Lastly, in these lectures my discourse is not, as in my other lectures, entirely free, descending to the familiar tones of conversation; but is deliberately composed, and delivered as it is written down. This, I conceive, is demanded by propriety; and I desire to give these lectures all the outward polish which is possible, in the only available time which I can spare from my other duties to devote to them. Public lectures are the free gifts of an academical teacher, and he who is not altogether ignoble, would willingly give in this way the best which it is in his power to bestow.

The two last-mentioned circumstances are unavoidable, and nothing remains for you but to change them into favourable conditions for yourselves. The first is already obviated, for such of you as attend my private course, by my last lecture upon the distinction between the philosophical and historical points of view; and I therefore consider you to be sufficiently prepared by that lecture, for the reception of the views we shall take of our present subject. To-day I shall, in the first place, survey the whole of that subject in the form in which it has been taught in the other course. and in that form exhibit and repeat it to you.

Any subject whatever which engages the attention of man, may be considered in a double aspect, and, as it were, with a double organ of sense;—either *historically*, by mere outward perception alone; or *philosophically*, by the inward spiritual *eye;*—and in this double aspect may the object of our present inquiries—the nature of the Scholar—be surveyed. The historical view lays hold of existing opinions about the object, selects from among them the most common and prevalent, regards these as truth, but thus obtains mere illusion and not truth. The philosophical view seizes upon things as they are in themselves,—*i. e.* in the world of pure thought, of which world God is the essential and fundamental principle,—and thus as God must have thought of them, could we attribute thought to him. Hence the inquiry, What is the nature of the Scholar?—as a philosophical question, means the following:—How must God have thought of the nature of the Scholar, if he did think of it? In this spirit we have taken up the question, and in this spirit we have given it the following answer:—In the first place, God has conceived of the whole world, not only *as it now is*, but also *as it shall become* by its own spontaneous growth; moreover, *what it now is* lies in the original Divine Thought of it as the germ of an endless development—a development indeed proceeding from the *highest* that exists in it, namely, of the rational beings, by means of their own freedom. If, then, these rational beings are to realize, by their own free act, that Divine Thought of the world *as it should be*, they must before all things comprehend and know it. Now, this comprehension and knowledge of the original Divine Thought is unattainable by them, except on condition of a second Divine Thought;—this, namely,—that they who are to be thus gifted should comprehend the Thought. Now, those who are so distinguished in the Divine world-creative Thought, that they should in part comprehend that original Divine Thought, are therein conceived of as Scholars; and, on the other hand, Scholars are possible and actually exist, where they do exist, only by the Divine Thought; and in that Divine Thought they are those who in part comprehend God in his original thought of the world;—Scholars, namely, in so far as they have elevated themselves to that Divine Thought by the various means to the attainment of the highest spiritual culture which exist in every age through the Divine Thought itself.

That Divine Thought of man as a Scholar must now itself take possession of him, and become his inward soul, the true essential life dwelling in his life. This can happen in two ways—either directly or indirectly. If it lays hold of the man directly, it forms itself in him, spontaneously and without outward aid, into such a knowledge of the Divine Plan of the universe as can find a place in that individual; all his thoughts and impulses of themselves take the most direct way to this end; whatever he does, prompted by this thought, is good and right, and must assuredly prosper, for it is an immediately *divine* act. This phenomenon we call Genius. In individual cases it can never be determined whether a man is, or is not, the subject of this immediate influence of the Divine Thought.

Or, the second and generally applicable case is when the Divine Thought of man as a Scholar lays hold of, inspires and animates him only indirectly. He finds himself necessitated to study by his position, which, being determined without his assistance, he must regard as the thought of God. He enters upon this vocation, in consequence of the thought that it is the purpose of God in him and for him, with Integrity; for so we call the faith that God has a purpose in our being. By thus embracing his vocation not merely because *it is his*, but because *it is made his solely by the divine thought and purpose*, does his person as well as knowledge, which is his calling, become to him, before all other things, honourable and holy. It was this last-mentioned thought which we treated of particularly in our previous lecture, and which we propose to follow out to-day.

This thought of the divinity and holiness of his vocation is the soul of his life—the impulse which produces all that goes forth from him—the æther in which everything around him is bathed. His conduct and doings in the outward world must then harmonize with this thought. He needs no conscious exertion of his individual will to bring his actions into harmony with this Divine Thought; he needs not to exhort, urge, or compel himself to this harmony, for he cannot possibly act otherwise: were he to endeavour to act in opposition to it, then he would need to persuade, to urge, to compel himself to that course, but without success.

Keep this stedfastly in view while we now pass from the *idea* of the true-minded scholar, to its outward *manifestation.* Our morality—if it be morality which we now propound to you,—our morality does not enact laws; like all philosophy, it confines itself to nature and necessity, and only describes what does and does not flow from these. Could this morality permit itself an external wish, and hope for its realization, it would be to strike the hard and barren rock which confines the fountain of good, so that its waters might spontaneously gush forth in their original purity to enrich the inward juices of the tree; but it would never desire with idle art to engraft thereon foreign fruits which cannot grow from such a stock. Hence I shall not even touch upon many things which might seem appropriate in this place; and of many others upon which I do touch, I shall speak with moderation,—not as if I did not know that these things have other aspects under which they must be spoken of with greater severity, but because I shall here only judge the Actual by the holiness of the Ideal, which must on no account be dragged down to certain depths of degradation. Let who will be teacher of external morality, we shall not here come into contact with the vulgar who find their motives to action in impulses from without.

We have already said that the acceptance of his vocation by the Student *as a Divine Thought,* makes his own person holy and honourable to him. This view of his person will spontaneously show itself in his outward life, without direct thought and will upon his part, as sacred purity and freedom from all constraint;—not expressly recognized as such by himself, but because no other mode of life falls within his range of thought.

To describe his life in one word:—*he shuns the contact of the vulgar and ignoble.* Where these meet him, he draws back, like the well-known sensitive plant which shrinks from the touch of our finger. Where aught vulgar or ignoble is present, he is not to be found;—it has forced him from it, before it came near to him.

What is vulgar and ignoble? So asks not he;—his inward sense prompts the answer in every case. We only put the question, in order to describe his refined life, and to delight ourselves in contemplating the picture.

Everything is vulgar and ignoble which degrades the fancy, and blunts the taste for the holy. Tell me what direction thy thoughts take, not when thou with tightened hand constrainest them to a purpose, but when in thy hours of recreation thou allowest them freely to rove abroad;—tell me what direction they *then* take—where they naturally turn as to their most loved home—in what thou thyself findest the chief enjoyment of thy inmost soul;—and then I will tell thee what are thy tastes. Are they directed towards the Godlike, and to those things in nature and art wherein the Godlike most directly reveals itself in imposing majesty? —then is the Godlike not dreadful to thee, but friendly; thy tastes lead thee to it, it is thy most loved enjoyment. Do they, when released from the constraint with which thou hast directed them towards a serious pursuit, eagerly turn to brood over sensual pleasures, and find relaxation in the pursuit of these?—then hast thou a vulgar taste, and thou must invite animalism into the inmost recesses of thy soul, before it can seem well with thee there. Not so the noble Student. His thoughts, when exhausted by industry and toil, return in moments of relaxation to the Holy, the Great, the Sublime,—there to find repose, refreshment, and new energy for yet higher efforts. In Nature as well as in the Arts, in Poetry and in Music, he seeks for the Sublime, and that in its great and imposing style. In Poetry for example, and in Oratory, he delights in the lofty voices of the ancient world, and, among the moderns, in that only which is produced and interpenetrated by the spirit of the ancients. Amusements in which the form of art is thrown around unmeaning emptiness, or even productions which appeal to the senses alone, and strive to please man by awakening and exciting his animal nature,—these have no charms for him. It is not necessary for him to consider beforehand how hurtful they might prove to him;—they do not please him, and he can acquire no liking for them.

Mature age may indeed turn its thoughts to such perversions, that it may discover in themselves the evidence of their perversion, and so laugh at them: it is secure from their contagion. Not so the inexperienced youth; a secret voice calls him back from them altogether. The man of ripe years, who is no longer occupied in forming his Ideal, but now seeks to impress it on the actual world,—he has to deal with perversion, and must pursue it through all its doublings and turnings, into its most secret haunts; and he cannot do this without contemplating it. Our hatred of the vulgar becomes weakened and blunted by time—by the experience that the foolishness of the world suffers no abatement, and that almost the only certain advantage which can be gained from it, is a laugh at its expense. But the youth cannot thus contemplate life,—he must not thus contemplate it. Every period of life has its peculiar calling. Good-natured laughter at vulgarity belongs to ripened age; the attitude of youth towards it is that of stern aversion,—and no one will be able in after years to look on and to laugh at it, and yet remain truly free and pure from its taint, who does not begin in youth by avoiding and hating it. Jesting is not suited for youth; they know little of man who think so; where youth is wasted in sport, it will never attain to earnestness and true existence. The portion of youth in life is the earnest and the sublime;—only after such a youth, does maturity attain to the beautiful, and with it to sportful enjoyment of the vulgar.

Further, everything is vulgar and ignoble which weakens spiritual power. I shall instance idleness;—to mention drunkenness or sensuality would be below the dignity of our subject. To remain without occupation of any sort—to cast a dull unmeaning gaze around us—will soon make our minds dull and unmeaning. This propensity to non-existence, to spiritual torpor, becomes a habit, a second nature; it surprises us in our studies or while listening to our teacher, creates a chasm in a strictly connected whole, interposes itself here and there between ideas which we should have bound together, so that we cannot comprehend even those which are most easy and intelligible. How this propensity should seize upon youth, may well remain unaccountable even to men of the deepest penetration and judgment; and in most cases it would be no delusion to seek its cause in some secret infirmity or vice. Youth is the age of newly-developed power; everywhere there are still impulses and principles destined to burst forth in new creations;—the peculiar character of youth is restless and uninterrupted activity; left to itself, it can never be without occupation. To see *it* slothful is the sight of winter in the time of spring, the blight and withering of a newly-opened flower. Were it naturally possible that this idleness should attempt to gain dominion over the true-minded and virtuous Student, he would never for a moment endure it. In the eternal thought of God his spiritual power has its source; it is thus his most precious treasure, and he will not suffer it to fall into impotent rigidity before it has fulfilled its task. He watches unceasingly over himself, and never allows himself to rest in slothful inaction. It is only for a short period that this exertion of the will is needed; afterwards, its result continues of itself, for it is happily as easy, or even more easy—for it is more natural—for man to accustom himself to industry than to idleness, and after a time passed in sustained activity, it becomes impossible for him to live without employment.

Lastly, everything is vulgar and ignoble which robs man of respect for himself, of faith in himself, and of the power of reckoning with confidence upon himself and his purposes. Nothing is more destructive of character than for man to lose all faith in his own resolutions, because he has so often determined, and again determined, to do that which nevertheless he has never done. Then he feels it necessary to flee from himself; he can no longer turn inward to his own thoughts, lest he be covered with shame before them; he shuns no society so much as his own, and deliberately gives himself up to dissipation and self-forgetfulness. Not so the upright Student; he keeps his purpose,—and whatever he has resolved to do, that he does, were it only because he has resolved to do it. For the same reason,—that he must be guided by his own purpose and his own insight,—he will not become a slave to the opinion of others, or even to the general opinion. It is doubtless of all things most ignoble, when man, out of too great complacency, which at bottom is cowardice and want of spirit—or out of indolence, which prevents him from thinking for himself, and drawing the principles of his conduct from his own mind,—gives himself up to others, and relies upon them rather than upon himself. Such an one has indeed no *Self* within him, and believes in no *Self* within him, but goes as a suppliant to others, and entreats of them, one after another, to lend him theirs. How can such an one regard himself as honourable and holy, when he neither knows nor acknowledges his own being?

I have said that the true-minded Student will not make himself a slave to common opinion; nevertheless he will accommodate himself to established customs where these are in themselves indifferent, precisely because he honours himself. The educated youth grows up amid these customs; were he to cast them off, he must of necessity deliberately resolve to do so, and attract notice and attention to himself by his singularities and offences against decorum. How should he whose time is occupied with weightier matters find leisure to ponder such a subject?—and is the matter so important, and is there no other way in which he can distinguish himself, that he must take refuge in a petty peculiarity? "No!" answers the noble-minded Student; "I am here to comprehend weightier things than outward manners, and I will not have it appear that I am too awkward to understand these. I will not by such littleness cause myself and my class to be despised and hated by the uncharitable, or goodnaturedly laughed at by those of better disposition; my fellow-citizens of other classes, or of my own, my teachers, my superiors, shall have it in their power to honour and respect me as a man, in every relation of human life."

And thus in all his relations does the life of the studious youth, who respects himself, flow on—blameless and lovely.

LECTURE VI.

OF ACADEMICAL FREEDOM.

The point to which we had arrived at the close of last lecture in our portraiture of the Student to whom his own person had become holy through the view of his vocation as a Divine Thought, was the consideration of his outward manners. With this subject is connected an idea, frequently broached but seldom duly weighed,—the idea of the Academical Freedom of the Student. Much, indeed, of what has been said in treating of this subject lies below the dignity of these lectures; and in proceeding further, our first duty will be to find a way of elevating it to our own standard. Hence I not only cheerfully admit that the discussion of this idea, which I hope to accomplish to-day, is a mere episode in my general plan; I must even entreat you so to consider it. But although this is a subject which one is, almost unconsciously, disposed to pass over altogether in a review of the moral behaviour of the Student, yet I do not hold this discussion to be one whit less legitimate because it is commonly avoided, and quite properly avoided, since it may so easily degenerate into polemics or satire, from both of which we are secured by the tone of these lectures.

What is Academic Freedom? The answer to this question is our task for to-day. As every object may be looked upon from a double point of view,—partly historical, partly philosophical,—so may the subject of our present inquiry. Let us, in the first place, survey it from the historical point of view,—*i. e.* let us try to discover what *they* meant by it who first allowed and introduced Academic Freedom.

Academies have always been considered as higher schools, in opposition to the lower preparatory schools, or *schools* properly so called;—hence, the *student* at the academy, in opposition to the *pupil* at the school. The freedom of the former could thus only be understood to be emancipation from some constraint to which the latter was subject. The pupil, for example, was compelled to appear at his class in a particular kind of clothing, which in those days indicated the dignity of the *future* Scholar; he dared not neglect his fixed hours of study; and he had many other duties imposed upon him, which were then regarded as a sort of sacred service preparatory to the future spiritual office to which the Student was usually destined; as for instance, choir-singing. In all these respects he was subject to strict and constant inspection;—the transgressor was often ignominiously punished; and indeed the teacher himself was both overseer and judge. Meanwhile Universities arose; and the outward, unlearned world would naturally be inclined to place them under similar regulations to those adopted in the only educational institutions with which it was familiar,—*i. e.* such as it saw in the schools. But this did not ensue,—and it was impossible that it should ensue. The founders of the first universities were Scholars of distinguished talent and energy, whereby they had fought their way through the surrounding darkness of their age to whatever insight they possessed; they were wholly devoted to their scientific pursuits, and lived in them alone;—they were encompassed by a brilliant reputation; in the circles of the great they were esteemed, honoured, consulted as oracles. They could never condescend to assume the position of overseers and pedagogues towards their hearers. Hence it was, that they held in great contempt the teachers of the lower schools, from whose level they had raised themselves by their own ability; and for that reason they would neither practise, nor allow themselves to be distinguished by, those things which characterized the former. Their call assembled around them hundreds and thousands from all countries of Europe; the number of their hearers increased both their importance and their wealth; and it could not be expected that they should give annoyance in any shape to those who brought these benefits to them. Besides, how was it possible that young men, with whom they had but a passing acquaintance among hundreds of their fellows,—who in a few months, a year, or at most a few years, would return to distant homes,—should interest them closely, or engage their affections? Neither the moral demeanour nor the scientific progress of their hearers interested them; and in these days a well-known Latin adage, which speaks of 'taking gold and sending home,' very naturally arose. Academic Freedom had arisen, as emancipation from the constraints of school, and from all supervision on the part of the teacher over the morality, industry, or scientific progress of the Student, who was to him a hearer and nothing more.

This is one side of the picture. It can easily be imagined, and on the supposition that no very high standard of morality then existed it might very naturally occur, that these founders of the early universities did so think of this matter, and that a portion of this mode of thought has come down to us through past centuries. Let us now look at the other side.

What, then, was the natural and reasonable *effect* of this idea of Academical Freedom on the minds of the Students? Did they think themselves highly honoured by this indifference on the part of their teacher to their moral dignity and scientific improvement?—and did they demand this indifference as a sacred right? I cannot believe it,—for this indifference amounts to disregard and contempt of the Student, and it is most offensive to tell him to his face, by such treatment—"I care not what you become." Or would it be natural for them to conclude, from the carelessness of others about their moral demeanour and regular application to study, that therefore they themselves were entitled to neglect these things if they chose? and would they have acted reasonably had they made their Academic Freedom only a right to be immoral and indolent? I cannot believe it. Much more reasonable would it be, had they determined, because of this want of foreign superintendence, to exercise a stricter surveillance over themselves; if out of this freedom from outward constraint had arisen a clearer perception of their duty to urge themselves onward so much the more powerfully, to watch over themselves so much the more incessantly, and to look upon their Academic Freedom as liberty to do all that is becoming and right *by their own determination.*

In short, the Academic Freedom of the Student, taken historically, according to its actual introduction into the world, exhibits in its origin, in its progress, and in what of it still exists, an unjust and indecent contempt for the whole class of Students, as a most insignificant class; and the Student who considers himself honoured by this Freedom, and lays claim to it as a right, has fallen into a most extraordinary delusion;—he is certainly ill informed, and has never seriously reflected on the subject. It may indeed become the well-disposed man of riper years, who is always ready to turn an indulgent eye upon life and youth, to avert his attention from the awkwardness, the rudeness, and the many errors into which unbridled energy is apt to fall, good-naturedly to laugh at these, and to think that wisdom will come with years; but the youth who feels himself honoured by this judgment, and even demands it as his due, cannot have attributed to him a very delicate sense of honour.

Let us now consider this subject—the Academic Freedom of the Student—in its philosophical sense; i. e. *as it should be,*—as, under certain conditions it may be,—and (what follows from thence) how the actually existing Academic

Freedom will be accepted by the Student who understands and honours his vocation. We shall open a way to the attainment of insight into this matter through the following principles:—

1. The external freedom of the Citizen is limited in every direction and on all possible sides by Law; and the more perfect the Law, the greater is the limitation,—and so it should be, for this is the proper office of Law. Hence, there is no sphere remaining in which the *inward* freedom and morality of the Citizen can be *outwardly* exhibited and proved,—and there should be no such sphere. All that must be done is commanded, under penalties; all that is not to be done is forbidden, likewise under penalties. Every inward temptation to neglect what is commanded, or to do what is forbidden, is counterbalanced in the conscience of the Citizen by the firm conviction, that should he give way to the temptation, he must in consequence suffer a certain amount of evil. Let it not be said,—There is no existing legislation so all-comprehensive, nor is the sagacity and vigilance of any tribunal so infallible, that every offence is sure to meet its punishment. I know this; but as I said before, it *should be* thus, and this is what we should regularly and constantly approximate to. Legislation cannot calculate on the morality of men; for its object—the freedom and security of all within their respective spheres—cannot be left to depend on so uncertain a thing. For the just man there is indeed no *law* under any possible legislation; he will commit no evil even although it were not forbidden, and whatsoever is good and right, that he will do without being urged to it by the command of authority; he is never tempted to crime, and therefore the idea of its attendant punishment never enters his mind. He is conscious of his virtue, and in this consciousness he has his reward within himself. But *externally,* there is no distinction between him and the unjust man, who is only withheld from the commission of every wrong within his power, and only impelled to every act of

duty,—by the threatenings of the law:—the first cannot do or leave undone anything more than the latter, but only does or does not the same things from a different motive, which is not outwardly apparent.

2. The Scholar and the unlearned person, under this legislation, stand and should stand on common ground,—*as Citizens.* Both can raise themselves above the law in the same way,—by integrity of purpose;—but this is not calculated upon in either of them, and in neither can this integrity become apparent in the sphere of external legislation. And since the Scholar is further a member of a certain class in the State, and practises in it a certain calling, he lies also under the compulsory obligations belonging to that class and calling;—and here once more it cannot be apparent whether he fulfils his duties in this sphere from integrity of purpose or from fear of punishment; nor does it in any way concern the community by what motive he is actuated, so that his duties are fulfilled. Lastly, in those regions which have either not yet been reached by an imperfect legislation, or which cannot be reached at all by any external legislation, he is still accompanied by the fear of disgrace;—and here again it cannot be seen whether he does his duty in consequence of this fear or from inward integrity of purpose.

3. But besides these, there are yet other relations of the Scholar with which external legislation cannot interfere, and in which it cannot watch over the fulfilment of his duty—where the Scholar must be a law to himself, and hold himself to its fulfilment. In the Divine Idea he carries in himself the form of the future age, which one day must clothe itself with reality; and he must show an example and lay down a law to coming generations, for which he will seek in vain either in present or past times. In every age that Idea clothes itself in a new form, and seeks to shape the surrounding world in its image, and thus do continually arise new relations of the world to the Idea, and a new kind

of opposition of the former to the latter. It is the business of the Scholar so to interpose in this strife as to reconcile the activity with the purity of his Idea, its influence with its dignity. His Idea must not lie concealed within him; it must go forth and seize upon the world, and he is urged to this activity by the deepest impulses of his being. But the world is incapable of receiving this Idea in its purity; on the contrary, it strives to drag down the Idea to the level of vulgar thought. Could he forego aught of this purity, his task would be an easy one; but he is filled with reverence for the Idea, and he can give up no part of its perfection. Hence he has the difficult task of reconciling these purposes. No law—but why do I speak of *laws?*—no *example* of the fore-world or of his own time can reveal to him the means of this union,—for so surely as the Idea has assumed a new form in him, has his case never before occurred. Even reflection, of itself, cannot give him this point of union, for although, by reflection, the Idea itself in all its purity is revealed as the first point of the union, yet much more is needed before the second point—the mental condition of the surrounding world, and what may be expected from it—can be clearly and fully comprehended in the same thought. Well may those who have wrought most mightily upon their age have closed their career with the inward confession that their reliance on the spirit of their time had ever proved fallacious, that they never supposed it to be so perverse and imbecile as it afterwards proved, and that while they accurately estimated one of its aberrations and avoided it, another, hitherto unperceived, revealed itself. To succeed at all at any time, there is needed, in addition to reflection, a certain *tact*, which can only be acquired by early exercise and habit.

Further, it is clear that in this matter—in doing everything possible to reconcile the opposition between the inward purity of the Idea and its external activity—the Scholar can only be guided by his own determination, can have no other judge but himself, and no motive external to himself. In this no stranger can judge him,—in this no stranger can even wholly understand him, nor divine the deep purpose of his actions. In this region, so far is respect for the judgment of others from aiding his intention, that on the contrary he must here cast aside foreign opinion altogether, and look upon it as if it were not. He is led by his own purpose alone;—and truly he needs a mighty and immovable purpose to keep his ground against the temptations which arise even from his noblest inclinations. What is more noble than the impulse to action, to sway the minds of men, and to compel their thoughts to the holy and divine?—and yet this impulse may become a temptation to represent the holy in a common and familiar garb for the sake of popularity—and so to desecrate it. What is more noble than the deepest reverence for the holy, and disdain and annihilation of everything vulgar and opposed to it?—and yet this very reverence might tempt some one to reject his age altogether,—to cast it from him and cease to hold any intercourse with it. A mighty and good will is needed to resist either the first and most powerful, or the second, of these temptations.

It is evident from these considerations, that, for his peculiar vocation, the Scholar needs shrewd practical wisdom, a profound morality, strict watchfulness over himself, and a fine delicacy of feeling. It follows, that at an early age he should be placed in a position where it is possible and necessary for him to acquire this practical wisdom and delicacy of feeling, and that this cultivation of mind and character should be a peculiar element in the education of the future Scholar. Every Citizen, without exception, may cultivate these qualities, and must have it in his power to do so; legislation must leave this possibility open to him,—it is compelled to do so by its very nature. But it does not concern the legislature or the commonwealth whether the Citizen does or does not elevate himself to this state, because his vocation still remains within the range of external jurisdiction. But as for the Scholar, it is of importance to the commonwealth and to the whole human race that he should raise himself to the purest morality, allied with sound practical wisdom, since he is destined one day to enter a sphere where he absolutely leaves behind him all external judgment. The legislation *for him*, therefore, should not merely allow him the possibility of moral cultivation like every other citizen, but, so far as in it lies, it should place him under the outward necessity of acquiring this cultivation.

And how can it do this? Evidently only by leaving him to his own judgment as to what is becoming, seemly, and appropriate, and to his own superintendence over himself. Is he to create for himself an independent sense of what is proper and becoming? How can he do so if the law accompanies him everywhere, and everywhere declares what he is to do and what to avoid? Let the law prohibit those whom she can retain under her yoke, from indulgence in everything which she wishes them to renounce; but as for him who must one day leave her jurisdiction, let her trust him betimes as a noble and free man. The man of cultivated morality does not wait until the law discovers a thing to be unseemly, and directs its prohibition against it,—it would be ignominy for him to need such direction;—he anticipates the decree, and relinquishes that in which the vulgar around him indulge without scruple, simply because it is unbecoming his higher nature. Give the Student room to place himself in this class by his own effort alone. Is he to unfold in himself a profound and powerful morality, a tender delicacy of sentiment, a deep sense of honour? How can he do this surrounded by threats of punishment? Let the law rather speak to him thus:—"So far as I am concerned, thou mayest leave the path of right and follow after evil; no other harm shall overtake thee but to be despised and scorned,—despised even by thyself when thou turnest thine eye inwards. If thou wilt venture on this peril, venture on it without fear." Is the human race one day to confide to him its most important interests, and in his dealings with those interests is he to have confidence in himself? How can men trust him when they have never proved him?—how can he trust himself when he has never proved his own strength? He who has not yet been faithful in small things cannot be entrusted with great things; and he who has not been able to stand a trial before himself cannot without the basest dishonour accept an important trust. On these grounds we rest the claims of Academic Freedom—of an extensive yet well-considered Academic Freedom.

In a perfect State, the outward constitution of Universities would, in my opinion, be the following:—In the first place, the Students would be separated from other classes of the community pursuing different avocations, so that these classes might not, by the supposed possible abuse of Academic Freedom, be harassed or injured, tempted to similar irregularities, or misled into a hatred of the law while living under its rule, by the daily sight of a class free from its restraints. The Students at these Universities would enjoy a high degree of freedom;—instructions on morality and duty, and impressive pictures of a true life, would indeed be laid before them; they would be surrounded by good examples, and their teachers would not only be profound Scholars, but the choice of the best men in the nation; but of compulsory laws there would be very few. Let them freely choose either good or evil: the time of study is but the time of trial; the time for the decision of their fate comes afterwards;—and our arrangement has this advantage,—that unworthiness, where it exists, is clearly recognized as such, and can no longer be concealed.

The present actual constitution of Universities is indeed by no means of this kind. It is doubtful whether Academic Freedom was ever looked upon from the point of view from which we have described it, particularly whether it was ever so looked upon by those who gave the Universities their constitution. Academic Freedom has *actually* arisen in the way described in a former part of this lecture,—*i. e.* from disrespect towards the Student-class: and we may leave it undetermined by what influences the remnants of this system are now maintained; for even were it admitted that the same disrespect for the class, which still exists although in a less degree, and perhaps want of skill to abolish these relics of another age, were its only supports, yet this is of no moment to the true-minded Student, who judges of things not by their outward form, but by their inward spirit. Whatever others may think of Academic Freedom, he, for his part, takes it in its true sense:—as a means by which he may learn to direct himself when outward precept leaves him,—watch over himself when no one else watches over him,—urge himself forward where there is no longer any outward impulse,—and thus train and strengthen himself for his future high vocation.

LECTURE VII.

OF THE FINISHED SCHOLAR IN GENERAL.

The true-minded Scholar looks upon his vocation—to become a partaker of the Divine Thought of the universe—as the purpose of God in him; and therefore both his person and his occupation become to him, before all other things, honourable and holy; and this holiness shows itself in all his outward manifestations. Such is the point to which we have now arrived.

We have hitherto spoken of the Progressive Scholar—the Student; and we have seen how the sense of the dignity conferred upon his person by this exalted vocation expresses itself in his life. How his conviction of the holiness of knowledge pervades and influences his studies, we have already noticed in one of the early lectures, and it is not necessary to add anything to what we have said upon this point.

And it is the less necessary, since this reverence for knowledge which is felt by the Student, chiefly manifests itself in the appropriate bearing and holiness of his *person*, and is therein exhausted; while it is quite otherwise in the Finished Scholar. In the Progressive Scholar, that which he strives after—the Idea—has to acquire a form and an independent life which it does not yet possess. The Student does neither immediately possess nor thoroughly comprehend the Idea; he worships it only in obscurity, and can approach it only by means of his person, as the standard to which that person shall raise itself, the spirit by which it shall be swayed. He can as yet do nothing directly in its service; he can only live for it indirectly, by consecrating and devoting his person to its use as its appointed instrument, preserving himself pure in sense and spirit, because all impurity would mar and disqualify him for that high purpose; by giving himself up entirely to its influence, and pursuing and executing with unwearied industry, everything which may be-become a means of unfolding the Idea within him. It is otherwise with the Finished Scholar. As surely as he is such, has the Idea already *commenced* its proper and independent life within him; his *personal life* has now actually passed into *the life of the Idea*, and is annihilated therein; which extinction of self in the Idea was only *striven after* by the Student. As surely as he is a perfect Scholar, so surely is there now no longer in him any thought of self, but his whole thought is constantly engrossed in the thought of the Idea. And thus the distinction which we originally made between the holiness of his *person* and the holiness of his *vocation* now becomes a point of transition, from the contemplation of the Progressive, to that of the Finished Scholar,—the portraiture of whom it is now my purpose to place beside that of the Progressive Scholar.

Hitherto we have chiefly considered the Progressive Scholar in the character of a Student at a University; and these two ideas have been almost constantly associated together in our previous lectures. Now, for the first time, when we have to accompany the Student from the Academy into life, we must call to mind that the studies and character of the Progressive Scholar are not necessarily completed with his residence at the University; nay, further on, we will even perceive a ground upon which we say that, properly speaking, his studies have only their true beginning after his academic course has ended. This much, however, remains true, as the sure result of what has been already said,—that the youth who during his residence at the University is not *at least* inspired with respect for the holiness of knowledge, and does not *at least* learn to honour his own person to such an extent as not to render it unworthy of his high vocation, will never afterwards attain to any true sense of the dignity of knowledge; and whatever part he may perform in life, he will perform it as a piece of common handicraft, and with the sentiment of an hireling who has no other motive to his labour than the pay which he is to receive for it. To say anything more of such an one lies beyond the boundaries of our present subject.

But the Student who is penetrated with the conviction that the essential purpose of his studies will be frustrated unless the Idea acquire an intrinsic form and independent life within him, and that in the highest perfection,—*he* will by no means lay aside his studies and scientific labours when he leaves the University. Even if he be compelled by outward necessity to enter upon a secular employment, he will devote to knowledge all the time and ability which he can spare from that employment, and will neglect no opportunity which presents itself of attaining a higher culture, assured that the continual exercise of his faculties in the pursuit of learning, will be very profitable to him even in transaction of his ordinary business. Even amid the brilliant distinctions of office—even in mature age—he will restlessly strive and labour to master the Idea, never resigning the hope of becoming greater than he now is, so long as strength permits him to indulge it. Without this untiring effort, much true Genius would be wholly lost, for scientific talent usually unfolds itself more slowly, the higher and purer its essential nature, and its clear development waits for mature years and manly strength.

The Student who is penetrated with deep respect for the holiness of the Scholar's vocation, will be guided by that respect in the choice of an active profession; and, *particularly,* in the province of learning, if he do not feel the deepest conviction of his ability to fulfil its highest duties, he will choose a subordinate occupation, restrained from assumption by his reverence for the dignity of knowledge. But a subordinate Scholar-occupation is one in which the ends to be sought for have been laid down by some other intellect possessing a knowledge of the Idea, and in which the capacities which have been acquired through study, considered as an effort to the attainment of the Idea, are only employed as means to fulfil those purposes which have thus been prescribed from without. His person is thus not degraded into a passive instrument; he is for ever secured against that by the general view he takes of human life and its significance; —he serves God alone in spirit and in sense; and, under the leading of his superiors, whom he leaves to answer for the direction which they give to his actions and their results, he promotes God's purposes with men, which must embrace all forms of human activity. Thus does he proceed in his choice of a secular employment as surely as he has been inspired in his youth with respect for the dignity of the peculiar vocation of the Scholar. To undertake this latter without an intimate consciousness of the possession of the appropriate power and cultivation, is to profane it, and manifests a want both of delicacy and of principle. And it is impossible that he should fall into error on this point; for if he has only passed through his academic course in a creditable manner, then he has certainly acquired, in some degree, a perception of what is worthy, and has obtained a standard by which he can take his own intellectual dimensions. If a conscientious course of study at a University secured no other advantage than that of presenting to youth a picture of the dignified calling of the Scholar as a model for life, and of repelling from this sphere those who are not endowed with the requisite ability, such a course would, on account of this advantage alone, be of the utmost importance to the Student.

We have thus generally described the nature of a subordinate Scholar-occupation. It does not demand in him who pursues it, the immediate possession of the Idea, but only that knowledge which is acquired in striving after such possession. It is to be understood that in this again, there are higher and lower grades, as the occupation requires a wider or narrower range of knowledge,—and that, in this respect too, the conscientious man will not undertake anything which exceeds his powers. It is unnecessary to describe these subordinate Scholar-occupations in detail. The higher and peculiar calling of the Scholar may be described so as to exhaust all its particular forms, and it is then easy to draw this consequence:—'All those pursuits which are usually followed by educated men, but which do not find a place in this all-comprehensive delineation of the higher calling of the Scholar, but are excluded from it, are subordinate Scholar-occupations.' We have therefore only now to lay before you this perfect delineation.

In our first lecture we have already definitely characterized the life of him in whom learned culture has fulfilled its end:—his life is itself the life of the Divine Idea in the world, changing and reconstructing it from its very foundation. In the same place we have said that this life may manifest itself in two forms;—either in actual external being and action, or only in Idea; which two distinct modes of manifestation together constitute the peculiar vocation of the Scholar. The first class comprehends all those who, by their own strength and according to their own idea, assume the guidance of human affairs, and therein create and maintain a perfection in constant harmony with each succeeding age; who, originally, as the highest free leaders of men, direct their social relations, and the relation of the whole to passive nature;—not those alone who stand in the higher places of the earth,—as kings, or the immediate councillors of kings, but all without exception who possess the right and calling, either by themselves or in concert with others, to think, judge, and resolve independently concerning the original disposal of these affairs. The second class embraces the *Scholars*, properly and especially so called, whose vocation it is to maintain among men the knowledge of the Divine Idea, to elevate it unceasingly to greater clearness and precision; and thus to transmit it from generation to generation, ever growing brighter in the freshness and glory of renewed youth. The first class act directly upon the world,—they are the immediate point of contact between God and reality;—the last are the mediators between the pure spirituality of thought in the Godhead, and the material energy and influence which that thought acquires through the instrumentality of the first class; they are the trainers of the first—the enduring pledge to the human race that men of the first class shall ever be found among them. No one can belong to the first class without having already belonged to the second—without always continuing to belong to it.

The second class of Scholars is again separated into two subdivisions, according to the manner in which they communicate to others their conception of the Idea. Either their first object is, by immediate and free personal communication of their ideal conception, to cultivate in future Scholars a capacity for the reception of the Idea; so that they may afterwards lay hold of it and comprehend it for themselves,—and then they are educators of Scholars, *teachers* in the higher or lower schools;—or, they propound their conception of the Idea, in a complete and finished form, to those who have already cultivated the capacity to comprehend it. This is at present done by books,—and they are thus—*Authors.*

The classes which we have now enumerated, whose several occupations are not necessarily portioned out to different individuals, but may quite easily be united in one and the same person, comprise all true and proper Scholars, and exhaust the whole vocation of those in whom learned culture has fulfilled its end. Every other function, whatever name it may bear, which the *Educated Man*[*] (who may be distinguished by this title from the true Scholar) is called upon to fulfil, is a subordinate Scholar-occupation. The 'Educated Man' continues in it, only because he has not by his studies been able to attain to the rank of the true Scholar, but nevertheless finds a useful purpose to which the capacities and knowledge, which are acquired in this sphere, may be applied. It is by no means the object of learned culture to train subalterns, and no one should study with a view to the office of a subaltern; for then it may happen that he does not attain even to that rank. Only because it was foreseen that a majority of Students would fall short of their proposed destination, have subordinate occupations been set apart for them. The subaltern receives the direction of his activity from a foreign intellect; he needs to exercise judgment in the choice of his *means*,—but in respect of the *end*, he must practise only the most punctual obedience. The acknowledged sacredness of the peculiar vocation of the Scholar restrains every honest 'Educated Man' who is not conscious of the possession of the Idea, from undertaking it, and constrains him to content himself with a subordinate office:—this and nothing more have we to say of him, for his business is no true Scholar-employment. We leave him to the sure guidance of that general integrity and faithfulness to duty which already, during his studies, have become the innermost principle of his life.

Such an one, by *renunciation* of the peculiar calling of the Scholar, shows that he looks upon it as sacred; he also, who with honesty and a good conscience *accepts* this calling, in any of its forms or divisions, shows by his actions and by his whole life that he looks upon it as sacred. How this recognition of the Holy, specially manifests itself in each particular department of the Scholar's vocation—the divisions of which we have already fully set forth—of this we shall speak in succession in the subsequent lectures. To-day we shall confine ourselves to showing how it manifests and reveals itself *in general,*—*i. e.* to that form of its manifestation which is common to all the departments of the Scholar's vocation.

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[*] Original "*Studirte*," one who has studied,—contrasted with "*Studirende*," one who studies. We have no single equivalent for "*Studirte*" in English.—TR.

The true-minded Scholar will not admit of any life and activity within him except the immediate life and activity of the Divine Idea. This unchangeable principle pervades and determines all his inward thoughts;—it also pervades and determines all his outward actions. With respect to the first,—as he suffers no emotion within him that is not the direct emotion and life of the Divine Idea which has taken possession of him, so is his whole life accompanied by the indestructible consciousness that it is at one with the Divine Life—that in him and by him God's work shall be achieved and his will accomplished; he therefore reposes on that will with unspeakable love, and with the immovable conviction that it is right and good. Thus does his vision become holy, enlightened, and religious; blessedness arises within him,—and in it, changeless joy and peace and power,—in the same way as these may be acquired and enjoyed by the unlearned, and even the lowliest among men, through true devotion to God, and honest performance of duty viewed as the will of God. Hence, these are no exclusive property of the Scholar, but are only noticed here with the view that he too may become a partaker in this religious aspect of his life, and become so by the way which we have pointed out.

This principle pervades the conduct of the true Scholar. He has no other purpose in action but to express his Idea, and embody the truth which he recognizes, in word or work. No personal regard, either for himself or others, can impel him to do that which is not demanded by this purpose,—no such regard can cause him to neglect anything which is required by this purpose. His person, and all personality in the world, have long since vanished from before him, and entirely disappeared in his effort after the realization of the Idea. The Idea *alone* impels him; where it does not move him, he rests, and remains inactive. He does nothing with precipitation, hurried forward by disquietude and restlessness; these may well be symptoms of unfolding power, but they are never to be found in conjunction with true, developed, mature and manly strength. Until the Idea stands before him clear and breathing, finished and perfect even to word or deed, nothing moves him to action; the Idea rules him entirely, governs all his powers, and exhausts all his life and effort. To its manifestation he devotes his whole personal being without reserve or intermission, for he looks upon his life only as the instrument of the Idea.

Would that I could make myself intelligible to you,—would that I could persuade you,—touching this one point which we now approach on every side!—Whatever man may do, so long as he does it from himself, as a finite being, by himself, and through his own counsel,—it is vain, and will sink to nothing. Only when a foreign power takes possession of him, and urges him forward, and lives within him in room of his own energy, does true and real existence first take up its abode in his life. This foreign power is ever the power of God. To look up to it for counsel—implicitly to follow its guidance,—is the only true wisdom in every employment of human life, and therefore most of all in the highest occupation of which man can partake,—the vocation of the true Scholar.

LECTURE VIII.

OF THE SCHOLAR AS RULER.

He in whom learned culture has actually accomplished its end,—the attainment and possession of the Idea,—shows, by the manner in which he regards and practises the calling of the Scholar, that his vocation is to him, before all other things, honourable and holy. The Idea, in its relation to the progressive improvement of the world, can be expressed—either, *first*, in actual life and conduct; or, *secondly*, in ideas only. It is expressed in the first mode by those who, as the highest free leaders of men, originally guide and order their affairs;—their relations with each other, or the legal condition; and their relation to passive nature, or the dominion of reason over the irrational world; —who possess the right and calling, either by themselves or in concert with others, to think, judge, and resolve independently concerning the actual arrangement of these relations. We have to speak to-day of the worthy conception and practice of this vocation. As we have already taken precautions against misunderstanding by a strict definition of our meaning, we shall, for brevity's sake, term those who practise this calling—*Rulers.*

The business of the Ruler has been described in our early lectures,—and so definitely, that no farther analysis is necessary for our present purpose. We have only to show what capacities and talents must be possessed by the true

Ruler—by what estimate of his calling, and what mode of practising it, he proves that he looks upon it as sacred.

He who undertakes to guide his age and order its constitution, must be exalted above it—must not merely possess an historical knowledge of it, but must thoroughly understand and comprehend it. The Ruler possesses, in the first place, a living and comprehensive idea of that department of human life which he undertakes to superintend, and knows what is its essential being, meaning, and purpose. Further, he perfectly understands the changing and adventitious forms which it may assume in reality, without prejudice to its inward nature. He knows the particular form which it has assumed at the present time, and through what new forms it must be led nearer and nearer to its unattainable Ideal. No part of its present condition is, in his view, necessary and unchangeable, but is only an incidental point in a progression which is constantly rising towards higher perfection. He knows the *Whole*, of which his own province is a part, and of which every improvement of the latter must still remain a part; and he never loses sight of this Whole in contemplating the improvement of individual parts. This knowledge gives to his inventive faculty the means of accomplishing the improvements he may devise; the same knowledge secures him from the mistake of disorganizing the Whole by supposed improvements of individual parts. His eye always combines the part with the Whole, and the idea of the latter with its actual manifestation.

He who does not look upon human affairs with this unfettered glance, is never a Ruler, whatever station he may occupy,—nor can he ever become one. Even his mode of thought, his faith in the unchangeableness of the present, places him in a state of subordination, makes him an instrument of him who created that arrangement of things in the permanence of which he believes. This frequently happens; and thus all times have not actual Rulers. Great spirits of the fore-world often rule over succeeding ages long after their death, by means of men who are nothing in themselves, but are only continuations and prolongations of their life. Very often too, this is no misfortune; only those who desire to penetrate human life with deeper insight ought to know that these are not true Rulers, and that under them the age does not move forward, but rests—perhaps to gain strength for new creations.

The Ruler, I said, thoroughly comprehends the department which he undertakes to superintend; he knows the essential character and idea of all its individual members, and looks upon it as the absolute will of God with man. It is not to him a means to the attainment of any end whatever, nor in particular to the production of human happiness; but he looks upon it as in itself an end—as the absolute mode, order, and form in which the human race should live.

Thus, in the first place, is his occupation ennobled and dignified in proportion to the nobility of his mode of thought. To direct all his thoughts and efforts, and devote his whole life to such a purpose as the following,—that mortal men may fall out as little as possible with each other in the short span of time during which they have to live together, that they may have somewhat to eat and drink, and wherewithal to clothe themselves, until they make way for another generation, which again shall eat and drink and clothe itself,—this business would appear to a noble mind a vocation most unworthy of its nature. The Ruler, after our idea of him, is secure against this view of his calling.—Through the idea which he has formed of his own vocation, the race among whom he practises it is likewise ennobled. He who has constantly to keep in view the infirmities and weaknesses of men, who has to guide their daily course, and who has frequent opportunities of surveying their general meanness and corruption, and who sees nothing more than these, cannot be much disposed to honour or to love them; and indeed those powerful spirits who have filled the most prominent places among men, but have not been penetrated by true religious feeling, have at no time been known to bestow much honour or respect upon their race. The Ruler, after our idea of him, in his estimate of mankind looks beyond that which they are *in the actual world*, to that which they are *in the Divine Idea*—to that which therefore they may be, should be, and one day assuredly will be; and he is thus filled with reverence for a race called to so high a destiny. Love is not required of him; nay, if you think deeper of it, it is even a kind of arrogance for a Ruler to presume to *love* the whole human race, or even his own nation—to assure it of his love, and, as it were, make it dependent on his kindness. A Ruler such as we have described is free from such love; his reverence for humanity, as the image and protected child of God, does more than overpower it.

He looks upon his vocation as the Divine Will with regard to the human race; he looks upon its practice as the Divine Will with regard to himself—the present individual; he recognizes in himself one of the first and immediate servants of God—one of the material organs through which God communicates with reality. Not that this thought excites him to vain self-exaltation;—he who is governed by the Idea has in it lost his personality, and he has no longer remaining any feeling of self, except that of employing his personal existence truly and conscientiously in his high vocation. He knows well that he has not bestowed upon himself this intuition of the Idea and the power which accompanies it, but that he has received them; he knows that he can add nothing to what has been given him except its honest and conscientious use; he knows that the humblest of men can do this in the same degree as he himself can do it, and that the latter has the same value in the sight of God which he himself should have in the same station. All outward rank, and the elevation above other men, which have been given, not to his person but to his dignity, and which are only conditions of the possession of this dignity,

—these will not dazzle him who seeks to deserve higher and more substantial distinctions. In a word:—he looks upon his occupation, not as a friendly service which he renders to the world, but as his absolute personal duty and obligation, by the performance of which alone he obtains, maintains, and repays his personal existence, and without which he would dwindle into nothing.

This view of his occupation as the Divine Will in him, supports and acquits him before himself in an important difficulty, which must very often occur to him who conscientiously follows this calling; and makes his step firm, determined, and unwavering. In no circumstances indeed should the individual, *considered strictly as an individual*, be sacrificed to the Whole; however unimportant the individual,—however great the Whole, and the interest of the Whole which is at stake. The parts of the Whole must often be placed in peril on account of the Whole; but let this danger be determined, not by the Ruler, but by the nature of the danger itself, which selects its victims from among individual men. How could a Ruler who is conscious of no other destiny for the human race but happiness here below, and looks upon himself only as the kind guardian of that happiness,—how could he answer before his conscience for the danger and consequent ruin of any individual victim, since that individual must have as good a claim to happiness as any other? How could such a Ruler, for example, answer before his conscience for determining upon a just war, a war undertaken for the support of the national independence threatened either immediately or prospectively?—for the victims who should fall in such a war, and for the manifold evils thereby inflicted on humanity? The Ruler who sees a Divine Purpose in his vocation stands firm and immovable before all these doubts—overtaken by no unmanly weakness. Is the war just?—then it is the will of God that there should be war; and it is God's will with him that he resolve upon it. Whatever fall a sacrifice to it, it is still the Divine Will that chooses the sacrifice. God has the most perfect right over all human life and all human happiness, for both have proceeded from him and both return to him; and in his creation nothing can be lost. So in the business of legislation. There must be a general law, and this law must be administered absolutely, without exception. The universality of the law cannot be given up for the sake of one individual who thinks his case so peculiar that he is aggrieved by the strict enforcement of the law, even although his allegation may have some truth in it. Let him bring the small injustice which is done to himself as an offering to the general support of justice among men.

The Divine Idea, ruling in the Ruler, and through him moulding the condition of his age and nation, now becomes his sole and peculiar Life;—which indeed is the case with the Idea under any form in which it may enter the soul of man;—he cannot have, nor permit, nor endure, any Life within him except this Life. He comprehends this Life with clear consciousness as the immediate energy and rule of God within him, as the fulfilment of the Divine Will in and by his person. It is unnecessary to repeat the proofs which we have already adduced in general, that through this consciousness his thought is sanctified, transfigured, and bathed in the Divinity. Every man needs religion—every man may acquire it—and with it every man obtains blessedness;—most of all, as we have seen above, does the Ruler need it. Unless he clothe his calling in the light of religion, he can never pursue it with a good conscience. Without this, nothing remains for him but either thoughtlessness and a mere mechanical fulfilment of his vocation, without giving account to himself of its reasonableness or justice; or if not thoughtlessness,—then want of principle, obduracy, insensibility, hatred and contempt of the human race.

The Idea, thus moulded on the Divine Life, lives in his life instead of his own person. It alone moves him,—nothing else in its room. His person has long ago disappeared in the Idea;—how then can any motive now arise from it? He lives in *honour*—transfused in the Divinity to work his Eternal Will;—how then can *fame*—the judgment of mortal and perishable men—have any significance for him? Devoted to the Idea with his whole being,—how can he ever wish to pamper or to spare himself? His person,—all personality,—has disappeared in the Divine Idea of universal order. That order is his ever-present thought; only through it does he conceive of individual men: hence neither friend nor foe, neither favourite nor adversary, finds a place before him; but all alike, and he himself with them, are lost for ever in the idea of the independence and equality of all.

The Idea alone moves him,—and where it does not move him, there he has no life, but rests in inactivity. He will never rouse himself to energy and labour only that something may come to pass, or to gain a reputation for activity; for his desire is not merely that something may come to pass, but that the will of the Idea may be accomplished. Until it speaks, he too is silent;—he has no voice but for it. He does not respect old things because they are old;—but as little does he desire novelty for its own sake. He looks for what is *better* and more perfect than the present; until this rises before him clearly and distinctly,—so long as change would lead only to difference, not improvement,—he remains inactive, and concedes to the old the privilege it derives from the right of ancient possession.

In this way does the Idea possess and pervade him without intermission or reserve, and there remains nothing either of his person or his life which does not burn a perpetual offering before its altar. And thus is he the most direct manifestation of God in the world.

That there is a God, is made evident by a very little serious reflection upon the outward world. We must end at last by resting all existence which demands an extrinsic foundation, upon a Being the fountain of whose life is within himself; by allying the fugitive phenomena which colour the stream of time with ever-changing hues, to an eternal and unchanging essence. But in the life of Divine Men the Godhead is manifest in the flesh, reveals itself to immediate vision, and is perceptible even to outward sense. In their life the unchangeableness of God manifests itself in the firmness and intrepidity of human will which no power can force from its destined path. In it the essential light of the Divinity manifests itself in human comprehension of all finite things in the One which endures for ever. In it the energy of God reveals itself, not in directly surrounding the human race with happiness—which is not its object—but in ordering, elevating, and ennobling it. A Godlike life is the most decisive proof which man can give of the being of a God.

It is the business of all mankind to see that the conviction of the Divine Existence, without which the very essence of their own being dwindles into nothing, should never perish and disappear from among them;—above all, it is the business of the Rulers, as the highest disposers of human affairs. It is not their part to bring forward the *theoretical* proof of this from human reason, or to regulate the mode in which this proof shall be adduced by the second class of Scholars; on the contrary, the *practical* proof of it, in their own lives, and that in the highest degree, devolves peculiarly upon them. If firm and intrepid will—if clear and all-comprehensive vision—if a spirit of order and nobility speak to us in their conduct, then in their works do we see God face to face, and need no other proof;—GOD IS, we will say,—for they are, and He in them.

LECTURE IX.

OF THE SCHOLAR AS TEACHER.

Besides those possessors of the Idea, whose business it is, by guiding and ordering the affairs of men, to introduce the Idea immediately into life,—there is yet another class—those namely who are peculiarly and by way of preëminence called Scholars, who manifest the Idea directly in spiritual conceptions, and whose calling it is to maintain among men the conviction that there is, in truth, a Divine Idea accessible to human thought, to raise this Idea unceasingly to greater clearness and precision, and thus to transmit it from generation to generation, fresh and radiant in ever-renewed youth.

This last vocation again divides itself into two very different callings, according to the primary object of these, and the mode of its attainment. Either the minds of men are to be trained and cultivated to a capacity for receiving the Idea; or the Idea itself is to be produced in a definite form for those who are already prepared for its reception. The *first* calling has particular men for its primary and immediate objects;—in it the only use which is made of the Idea is as a means of training and cultivating these men who are its primary objects, so that they may become capable of comprehending the Idea by their own independent effort. It follows that, in this calling, regard must be paid solely to the men who are to be cultivated, the degree of their cultivation, and their capacity of being cultivated; and that an influence is only valuable here, in so far as it effectually applies to those individuals upon whom it is directed. The *second* has for its object, the Idea itself, and the fashioning of the Idea into a distinct conception, and has no reference whatever to any subjective disposition or capacity of men; its business is prosecuted with no view to any but those who are capable of comprehending the Idea in the form thus given to it; the work itself settles and determines who shall receive it, and is only addressed to those who can comprehend it. The first object will be best and most fitly attained by the verbal discourses of the Teacher; the second by literary writings.

Both of these callings belong to the vocation of the Scholar in its proper and highest sense, and not to the subordinate Scholar-occupations, which only devolve upon a man because he has not attained the proper end of his studies. He who prosecutes his studies conscientiously, and so acquires a conviction of the importance of the vocation of the Scholar, but yet does not feel within himself a clear consciousness of the capacity to fulfil it, shows that he recognizes its sacred character, by not undertaking it; he who does undertake it, manifests the same conviction by exercising it worthily. In the next lecture we shall speak of the true Author; to-day we shall discourse of the upright Teacher of future Scholars.

The Teachers and Educators of those who devote themselves to the occupation of Scholar may be divided into two classes, and that on good grounds; viz. they are Teachers either in the lower Schools of learning, or in the higher or Universities. Not without deliberation do I class the Teachers in the lower Schools among the true and not the subaltern Scholars, and therefore demand of them that they attain possession of the Idea, and be penetrated by it,—if not with perfect light, yet with living warmth. He who is destined to study will, even while a boy, surround himself invisibly with the Idea and with its sanctity, and bathe his whole being in its influence. Nothing from which any ideal result may one day unfold itself, will be pursued by him as a piece of vulgar handicraft, and used as a means to the attainment of a partial object. Happily the objects which are peculiar to these Schools are of such a nature as to elevate him who pursues them conscientiously, and through him those who are committed to his care, above vulgar modes of thought;—did but the outward circumstances of the Teacher answer to his dignity, and his independence and station in society correspond with his most honourable calling. The *objects* of school-instruction, I said. In a fundamental study of language, pursued, as it must be, amid old modes of speech, far removed from our association of ideas, a deeper insight into ideas is gained; and from the works of the ancients, by means of which this study is pursued, an excellent and ennobling spirit speaks to the youthful mind. For this reason, the Teacher in these lower Schools should be a partaker of the Idea, because he has imperceptibly to familiarize the youth with the high and noble, before the latter is able to distinguish these from the vulgar,—to accustom him to these, and to estrange him from the low and ignoble. Thus guarded in his early years, and thus prepared for higher progress, the youth enters the University. Here, for the first time, can he be clearly taught and led to comprehend and acknowledge—that which I have endeavoured to utter to you in these lectures,—that our whole race has its only true existence in the Divine Thought—that it is only valuable in so far as it harmonizes with this Divine Thought—and that the class of Scholars has therein an existence, to the end that they may comprehend this Divine Thought, and imprint it on the world. At the University the Student first receives a clear idea of the nature and dignity of that vocation to which his life has been devoted beforehand. He must obtain that clear idea *here:* the Teacher in the lower Schools can look forward to another education for his pupils, and he counts upon that; but the Academic Teacher has no more extensive instruction to calculate upon for them, except that which the Progressive Scholar must bestow upon himself,—to the capacity for which, however, the Teacher must train him so that he may have it in his power to become his own instructor;—once released from the lecture-room, he is committed to himself and to the world. Herein, therefore, lies the characteristic difference between the lower and the higher Schools,—that at the lower School the youth has only a presentiment of his vocation; while at the University he clearly comprehends and recognizes it;—and from this difference the specific duties of the Teacher in the respective institutions may be deduced.

The Academic Teacher, of whom chiefly we have to speak, ought to train the Student who has already been made acquainted with the nature and dignity of his calling, to the capacity of receiving the Idea, and the power of developing it from his own consciousness, and giving it a form peculiar to himself;—he should do *all* this, *if he can.* But in every case, and *unconditionally,* he should fill the Student with respect and veneration for the proper calling of the Scholar. The first object of all study,—to lay hold of the Idea from a new and peculiar point of view, is by no means to be given up either by the Student himself, or by the Teacher on his behalf; but it is nevertheless possible that it may not be attained, and both must reconcile themselves beforehand to this possibility. Should this first object of study be unaccomplished, the Student may still become a useful, worthy, and upright man. But the second object of study,—that he acquire a reverence for the Idea during his efforts to attain it,—that on account of this reverence he forbear from undertaking anything for which he does not feel himself qualified,—that he consecrate himself to the service of the Idea, at least by permanently cherishing this reverence for what is unattainable by him, and contributing to the extent of his ability to maintain such a reverence among men;—this object is never to be relinquished; for were *it* not attained, then, through the very fact of his having studied, would his dignity as a man be lost, and he would sink the deeper, in consequence of the height to which he should have risen. The attainment by the Student of the first object of study is, to the Academic Teacher, a *conditional* duty,—conditioned by the possibility of its fulfilment. The attainment of the second he must ever look upon and acknowledge as his *unconditional* duty, which he must never deliberately relinquish It may indeed happen that he cannot accomplish even this, but he must never admit a doubt of its ultimate attainment.

What, then, can the Academic Teacher do for the attainment of this second object? I answer, he can do nothing for it exclusively; he can do nothing else than that which he must do for the first and highest object by itself. In pursuing and attaining the second, he is advancing to the attainment of the first. Would he inculcate upon his pupils reverence for knowledge?—they will not believe him if he do not himself exhibit in his whole life the deep reverence which he recommends to them. Would he thoroughly impress them with this reverence?—let him teach it, not in words only, but in deeds; let him be himself the living example, the abiding illustration of the principles which he desires them to accept as the guides of their life. He has described to them the nature of the Scholar's vocation as a manifestation of the Divine Idea,—he has told them that this Idea entirely pervades the true Scholar, and establishes its peculiar life, in place of his own, within him,—perhaps he has even told them by what precise way he himself, for his part, has to fulfil the purposes of knowledge, and in what his peculiar calling, as an Academic Teacher, consists. Let him show himself before them in his essential character,—as devoted to his vocation,—as a perpetual offering before its altar,—and they will learn to comprehend that knowledge is a sacred thing.

The *duties* of the Academic Teacher are not indeed changed by this aspect of his vocation; for, as we have said, he can do nothing for the attainment of the last object but what he must have done for the first and highest, by itself;—but his own view of his calling becomes calmer and more confirmed. Although it should not immediately become visible and evident to him, that he has attained his peculiar object,—of leading those who are entrusted to his care from mere passive dependence to spontaneous activity—from the dead letter to the living spirit; yet will he not suppose that he has laboured in vain. To Academic Study must succeed that peculiar and essential study to which the first is only a preparative. He can never know that he has not roused a powerful determination to this study—that he has not thrown into the soul some sparks which, though now unapparent, will blaze forth at the proper time. Even in the worst possible event,—that he has not accomplished even so much as this,—his activity has still another object; and if he has done something for *it*, his labour has not been utterly lost. If he has, at least, upheld, and in some breasts quickened or renewed, the faith that there is *something* worthy of the reverence of men; that by industry and honour men may elevate themselves to the contemplation of this object of reverence, and in this contemplation become strong and happy; if some have only had their occupation made holier in their eyes, so that they may approach it with somewhat less levity than before; if he can venture to hope that some have left his hall, if not precisely with more light, yet with more modesty than they entered it;—then he has not entirely lost the fruit of his exertions.

We said, that the Academic Teacher becomes an example of reverence for knowledge, by showing himself to be thoroughly and entirely penetrated by, and devoted to, his calling,—an instrument consecrated to its service.

What does this calling demand? Is the Academic Teacher to prepare men for the reception of the Idea?—then he must himself know the Idea, have attained it, and be possessed by it; otherwise how could he recognize in others the capacity for receiving that which is to himself unknown? He must first have cultivated this capacity in himself, and have a distinct and clear consciousness of possessing it; for it can only be recognized by him who truly and immediately possesses it, and the art of acquiring it can only be understood by him who has personally acquired it. He can only cultivate this capacity in men by means of the Idea itself, by presenting it to them, and accustoming them to it, in its most varied forms and applications. The nature of the Idea is peculiar to itself, and differs wholly from all that is mechanical in knowledge;—only by its reception can man cultivate the power of receiving it. By the communication of mechanical knowledge man may become versed in such mechanism, but can never be raised to the Idea. It is an obligation from which the Academic Teacher cannot be released, that he shall have comprehended the Idea with perfect clearness *as an Idea;* that, in the Idea, he shall have also comprehended the particular branch of knowledge which he cultivates, and through the Idea have understood the true nature, meaning, and purpose of this branch of knowledge;—and even his particular science is on no account to be taught merely for its own sake, but because it is a form or aspect of the one Idea; and in order that this form may be tested by the Student, and he be tested by it. If, at the conclusion of his University training, it were found that, even then, the Scholar could not be made to comprehend the true nature of study, then study would altogether disappear from the world—there would be study no longer; but the number of handicrafts would be increased. An upright man, who is not conscious of a living and clear comprehension of the Idea, will forbear to assume the vocation of the Academic Teacher. He will thus show his respect for that vocation, the nature of which he must have learned in the course of his studies.

The vocation of the Academic Teacher requires him to communicate the Idea,—not as the Author does, abstractly—in the one perfect conception under which it presents itself to his own mind,—but he must mould, express, and clothe it in an infinite variety of forms, so that he may bring it home, under some one of those adventitious vestures, to those by whose present state of culture he must be guided in the exercise of his calling. He must thus possess the Idea, not as a mere abstraction, but in great vitality, power, and flexibility. Above all, he must possess that which we have already described as the creative or artist-talent of the Scholar; namely, a perfect readiness and capacity to recognize, under any circumstances, the first germ of the Idea as it begins to unfold itself; in each individual case, to discover the most suitable means of aiding it in the attainment of perfect life, and in all cases, to associate it with a kindred form. The Author may possess only one form for his Idea,—if that form is perfect, he has fulfilled his duty;—the Academic Teacher must possess an infinite multiplicity of forms,—it is not his business to discover the most perfect form, but to find that which is most suitable under particular circumstances. A good Academic Teacher must be capable of being also an excellent Author, if he choose; but it does not follow that, on the other hand, a good Author should also be a good Academic Teacher. Yet this skill and versatility exist in different degrees, and he is not to be entirely excluded from the Academic calling who does not possess them in the highest degree.

From this skill which is required of the Academic Teacher in the embodiment of the Idea, there arises another demand upon him,—this, namely, that his mode of communication shall be always new, and bear the mark of fresh life actually present within it. Only living and present thought can enter other minds and quicken other thought: a dead, worn-out form, let it have been ever so living at a former time, must be called back to life by the power of others and its own;—the Author has a right to require this from his readers, but the Academic Teacher, who in this matter is not an Author, has no right to demand it.

The upright and conscientious man, as surely as he accepts this calling, and so long as he continues to practise it, gives himself up entirely to its fulfilment; willing, thinking, desiring nothing else than to be that which, according to his own conviction, he should be; and thus shows openly his respect for knowledge.

For knowledge, I say, as such, and *because it is* knowledge,—for knowledge in the abstract,—as the Divine Idea, one and homogeneous through all the different forms and branches in which it is revealed. It is quite possible that a Scholar who has devoted his life to a particular department of knowledge, may entertain a prepossession in favour of that department, and be apt to esteem it above all others, —either because he has accustomed himself to it, or because he thinks that his more distinguished calling may reflect some of its lustre upon himself. Whatever ability such an one may bring to the cultivation of his own department, he will never present to the unprejudiced spectator the picture of one who reveres knowledge for its own sake, and will never persuade the acute observer that he does so, while he shows less respect for other departments of knowledge which are as essential as his own. It will only thereby become evident that he does not conceive of knowledge as one perfect whole—that he does not think of his own department as a portion of this whole,—hence that he does not love his own department *as knowledge*, but only as a handicraft; which love for a handicraft may indeed be praiseworthy enough elsewhere, but in the domain of knowledge excludes him entirely from any right to the name of a Scholar. He who, although labouring in a limited province, actually partakes of true knowledge, and accepts his own calling as a part thereof, may perhaps have little even historical acquaintance with other provinces, but he has a genera conception of the nature of all others, and will constantly exhibit an equal reverence for all.

Let this love of his vocation and of knowledge be the sole guide of his life, visible to all men;—let him be moved by nothing else; regarding no personal interest either of himself or of others. Here as elsewhere, I shall say nothing of the common and vulgar desires which may *not* enter the circle of him who has approached and handled the sacred things of knowledge. I shall not suppose it possible, for instance, that a Priest of knowledge, who seeks to consecrate other Priests to her service, should avoid saying to them that which they dislike, because they do not hear *it* willingly, in order that they may continue to hear *him* willingly. Yet I may perhaps be permitted to mention one error, not quite so ignoble and vulgar, and to hold up its opposite to your view. In every word uttered by the Academical Teacher in the exercise of his calling, let it be knowledge that speaks,—let it be his longings to extend her dominion,—let it be his deep love for his hearers, not as *his* hearers, but as the future ministers of knowledge: knowledge, and these living desires to extend her dominion,—let these speak, not the Teacher. An effort to speak for the mere sake of speaking—to speak finely for the sake of fine speaking, and that others may know of it—the disease of word-making—sounding words, in which nevertheless no idea is audible,—is consistent with no man's dignity, and least of all with that of the Academic Teacher, who represents the dignity of knowledge to future generations.

Let him entirely resign himself to this love of his vocation and of knowledge. The peculiar nature of his occupation consists in this,—that knowledge, and especially that side of knowledge from which he conceives of the whole, shall continually burst forth from him in new and fairer forms. Let this fresh spiritual youth never grow old within him; let no form become fixed and rigid; let each sunrise bring him new joy and love for his vocation, and larger views of its significance. The Divine Idea is fixed and determined in his mind,—all its individual parts are likewise determined. The particular form of its expression for a particular age may also be determined; but the living movement of its communication is infinite as the growth of the human race. Let no one continue in this calling in whom the mode of this communication, although it may *have been* the most perfect of his age, begins to grow old and formal—none in whom the fountain of youth does not still flow on. Let him faithfully intrust himself to its current, so long as it will bear him forward: when it leaves him, then let him be content to retire from this ever-shifting scene of restless being;—let him separate the dead from the living.

It was a necessary part of the plan which I marked out to you, to treat of the dignity of the Academic Teacher. I hope that in doing so I have exhibited the same strictness with which I have spoken of the other subjects which have fallen under our notice,—without allowing myself to be seduced into any lenity towards it by the consideration that I myself practise the calling of which I have spoken, and that I have practised it even in speaking of it. Whence I have derived this firmness—on what feeling it rests,—you may inquire at another time; it is sufficient for you now to understand clearly, that Truth, in every possible application of it, still remains true.

LECTURE X.

OF THE SCHOLAR AS AUTHOR.

In order to complete our survey of the vocation of the Scholar, we have to-day only to consider that department of it which belongs to the *Author.*

I have hitherto contented myself with clearly setting forth the *true idea* of the different objects of our inquiry, without casting a single glance at the *actual* state of things in the present age. It is almost impossible to proceed in this way with the subject which I am to discuss to-day. The *idea* of the Author is almost unknown in our age, and something most unworthy usurps its name. This is the peculiar disgrace of the age—the true source of all its other scientific evils. The inglorious has become glorious, and is encouraged, honoured, and rewarded.

According to the almost universally received opinion, it is a merit and an honour for a man to have printed something merely because he has printed it, and without any regard to what it is which he has printed, and what may be its result. They, too, lay claim to the highest rank in the republic of letters, who announce the fact that somebody has printed something, and what that something is, or, as the phrase goes, who '*review*' the works of others. It is almost inexplicable how such an absurd opinion could have arisen and taken root, if men had considered this subject in its true light.

Thus stands the matter: In the latter half of the past century, *reading* took the place of some other amusements which had gone out of fashion. This new luxury demanded, from time to time, new fancy-goods; for it is of course quite impossible that one should read over again what one has read already, or those things which our forefathers have read before us; just as it would be altogether unbecoming to appear frequently in fashionable society in the same costume, or to dress according to the notions of one's grandfather. The new want gave birth to a new trade, striving to nourish and enrich itself by purveying the wares now in demand,—i. e. *bookselling*. The success of those who first undertook this trade encouraged others to engage in it, until, in our own days, it has come to this, that this mode of obtaining a livelihood is greatly overstocked, and the quantity of these goods produced is much too large in proportion to the consumers. The book-merchant, like the dealer in any other commodity, orders his goods from the manufacturer, solely with the view of bringing them to the market; at times he also buys uncommissioned goods which have been manufactured only upon speculation;—and the Author who writes for the sake of writing is this manufacturer. It is impossible to conceive why the book-manufacturer should take precedence of any other manufacturer; he ought rather to feel that he is far inferior to any other manufacturer, inasmuch as the luxury to which he ministers is more pernicious than any other. That he find a merchant for his wares may indeed be useful and profitable to him, but how it should be an honour, is not readily discovered. Surely no value can be set upon the judgment of the publisher, which is only a judgment on the saleableness or unsaleableness of the goods.

Amid this bustle and pressure of the literary trade, a happy thought struck some one;—this, namely, out of all the books which were printed, to make one periodical book, so that the reader of this book might be spared the trouble of reading any other. It was fortunate that this last purpose was not completely successful, and that everybody did not take to reading this book exclusively, since then no others would have been purchased, and consequently no others printed; so that this book too, being constantly dependent upon other books for the possibility of its own existence, must likewise have remained unprinted.

He who undertook such a work, which is commonly called a Literary Journal, Literary Gazette, &c. &c., had the advantage of seeing his work increase by the charitable contributions of many anonymous individuals, and of thus earning honour and profit by the labour of others. To veil his poverty of ideas, he pretended to pass judgment on the authors whom he quoted,—a shallow pretence to the thinker who looked below the surface. For either the book is—as most books are at present—a bad book, only printed that there might be one more book in the world; and in this case it should never have been written, and is a nullity, and consequently the judgment upon it is a nullity also;—*or*, the book is a true literary work, such as we shall hereafter describe; and then it is the result of an entire powerful life devoted to art and science, and so would require another entire life as powerful as the first to be employed in its judgment. On such a work it is not exactly possible to pass a final judgment in a couple of sheets, within a quarter or half year after its appearance. How can it be any honour to contribute to such collections, when good talent will always be more inclined to execute a connected work upon a plan originated and drawn out by itself, than to allow the current of its thoughts to be interrupted by every accident of the day, until that interruption is broken by some new occurrence? The disposition continually to watch the thoughts of others, and on those thoughts, please God, to hang our own attempts at thinking—is a certain sign of immaturity and of a weak and dependent mind. Or does the honour consist in this,—that the conductors of such works should consider *us* capable of filling the office of judge, and make it over to us? Their opinion goes no farther in reality than that of a common unlettered printer,—of the saleableness or unsaleableness of the goods, and of the outward reputation which would thereby accrue to their critical establishment.

I am not unaware that I have now said something very paradoxical. All of us who are connected in any way with knowledge, which in this connection may be termed literature, grow up in the notion that literary industry is a blessing—an advantage—an honourable distinction of our cultivated and philosophical age; and but few have power to see through its supposed advantages, and resolve them into their essential nothingness. The only apparent reason which can be adduced in defence of this perverted industry, is, in my opinion, the following;—that thereby a great public is kept alive, roused to attention, and, as it were, held together; so that, should anything of real value and importance be brought before it, this public shall be found already existing, and not have to be first called together. But I answer, that, in the first place, the means appear much too extensive for the end contemplated, and it seems too great a sacrifice that many generations should spend their time upon *nothing*, in order that some future generation may be enabled to occupy itself with *something;*—and further, it is by no means true that a public is only kept alive by this perverse activity; it is at the same time perverted, vitiated, and ruined for the appreciation of anything truly valuable. Much that is excellent has made its appearance in our age—I shall only mention the Kantean Philosophy;—but this very activity of the literary market has destroyed, perverted, and degraded it, so that its spirit has fled, and now only a ghost of it stalks about, which no one can venerate.

The literary history of our own day shows the real thinker how writing for writing's sake may be honoured and applauded. A few authors only excepted, our literary men have in their own writings borne worse testimony against themselves than any one else could have given against them; and no even moderately well-disposed person would be inclined to consider the writers of our day so shallow, perverse, and soulless, as the majority show themselves in their works. The only way to retain any respect for the age, any desire to influence it, is this,—to assume that those who proclaim their opinions aloud are inferior men, and that only among those who keep silence some may be found who are capable of teaching better things.

Thus, when I speak of the literary *vocation,* it is not the literary *trade* of the age which I mean, but something quite other than that.

I have already set forth the Idea of the Author when distinguishing it from that of the Oral Teacher of Progressive Scholars. Both have to express and communicate the Idea in language: the last, for particular individuals, by whose capacity for receiving it he must be guided; the first, without regard to any individual, and in the most perfect form which it can assume in his age.

Is the Author to embody the Idea?—he must then be a partaker of the Idea. All literary works are either works of *Art* or of *Science.* Whatever may be the subject of a work of the first class, it is evident that since it does not express an immediate conception *in itself,*—and thus *teaches* the reader nothing,—it can only awaken *in the reader himself* a conception of the Idea, and directly move him to its possession; otherwise it would be only an empty play of words, and have no real meaning. Whatever may be the subject of a scientific work, the author of such a work must not conceive of knowledge in a mere historical fashion, and have only received it from others; but he must for himself have spiritually penetrated to the Idea by some one of its sides, and have produced it in a self-creative, new, and hitherto unknown form. If he is only a link in the chain of historical tradition, and can do no more than hand down to others his knowledge just as he himself has received it, and as it already exists in some work whence he has obtained it,—then let him leave others in peace to draw from this fountain whence he has also drawn. What need is there of his officious intermeddling? To do over again that which has been done already, is to do nothing; and no man who possesses common honesty and conscientiousness will allow himself to indulge in such idleness. Can the age, then, furnish him with no occupation which is suited to his powers, that he must thus employ himself in doing what he should not do? It is not necessary that he should write an entirely *new* work in any branch of knowledge, but only a *better* work than any hitherto existing. He who cannot do this, should absolutely not write;—it is a crime—a want of honesty, to do so, which at the most can only be excused by his thoughtlessness and utter want of any conception of the subject of which he treats.

Is he to express the Idea in language, in a generally intelligible manner—in a perfect form?—the Idea must have become in him so clear, living, and independent, that it already clothes itself to him in words; and, penetrating to the inner spirit of his language, frames from thence a vesture for itself, by its own inherent power. The Idea itself must speak, not the author. His will, his individuality, his peculiar method and art, must disappear from his page, so that only the method and art of his Idea may live the highest life which is attainable in his language and in his time. As he is free from the obligation under which the Oral Teacher lies,—to accommodate himself to the capacities of others,—so he has not this apology to plead before himself. He has no specific reader in view, but he himself moulds his reader, and lays down to him the law which he must obey. There may be printed productions addressed only to a certain age and a certain circle;—we shall see afterwards under what conditions such writings may be necessary; but these do not belong to the class of essentially *literary works* of which we now speak, but are printed discourses—printed because the circle to which they are addressed cannot be brought together.

In order that in this way the Idea may in his person become master of his language, it is necessary that *he* shall first have acquired a mastery over that language. The Idea does not rule the language *directly*, but only through him as possessor of the language. This indispensable mastery of the Author over his language is only acquired by preparatory exercises, long continued and persevered in; which exercises are studies for future works, but are not themselves works—which the conscientious Scholar writes indeed, but will never allow to be printed. It requires, I said, long and persevering exercise; but, happily, these requirements mutually promote each other;—as the Idea becomes more vivid, language spontaneously appears; and as facility of expression is increased, the Idea flows forth in greater clearness.

These are the first and most necessary conditions of all true Authorship. The Idea itself,—of expressing his Idea in language in the manner which we have described,—is that which lives, and alone lives, in him within whom the presentiment has arisen that he may one day send forth a literary work;—it is this which animates him in his preparations and studies for that work, as well as in the future completion of his design.

By this Idea he is inspired with a dignified and sacred conception of the Literary calling. The work of the Oral Teacher is, in its immediate application, only a work for the time, modified by the degree of culture possessed by those who are entrusted to his care. Only in so far as he can venture to suppose that he is moulding future Teachers worthy of their calling, who, in their turn, will train others for the same task, and so on without end, can he look upon himself as working for eternity. But the work of the Author is in itself a work for eternity. Even should future ages take a higher flight in knowledge than that which is revealed in his work, still in that work he has not recorded *his* knowledge alone, but also the fixed and settled character of a certain age in its relation to that knowledge; and this will preserve its interest so long as the human race endures. Independent of all vicissitude and change, his pages speak in every age to all men who are able to realize his thought, and thus continue their inspiring, elevating, and ennobling work even to the end of time.

The Idea, in this its acknowledged sacredness, moves him,—and it alone moves him. He does not think that he has attained anything, until he has attained all—until his work stands before him in the purity and perfectness after which he struggled. Devoid of love for his own person, faithfully devoted to the Idea by which he is constantly guided, he recognizes with certain glance, and in its true character, every trace of his former nature which remains in the expression of the Idea, and unceasingly strives to free himself from it. So long as he is not conscious of this absolute freedom and purity, he has not attained his object, but still works on. In such an age as we have already described, in which the publication of knowledge has greatly increased, and even fallen into the hands of some who are better fitted for any other occupation than for this, it may be necessary for him to give some previous account of his labours; other modes of communication, too—that of the Teacher for instance—may present themselves to him; but he will never put forth these occasional writings for anything else than what they are—preliminary announcements adapted to a certain age and certain circumstances; he will never look upon them as finished works, destined for immortality.

The Idea alone urges him forward;—nothing else. All personal regards have disappeared from his view. I do not speak of his own person,—that he has entirely forgotten *himself* in his vocation;—this has already been sufficiently set forth. Neither has the personality of others any more weight with him than his own, when opposed to truth and the Idea. I do not mention that he will not encroach upon the rights of other Scholars or Authors in their civic or personal relations: that is altogether below his dignity who has only to do with realities;—it is also below the dignity of these discourses to make mention of that. But this I will remark, that he will not allow himself to be restrained, by forbearance towards any person, from demolishing error and establishing truth in its place. The worst insult that could be offered, even to a half-educated man, would be to suppose that he could be offended by the exposure of an error which he entertained, or the proclamation of a truth which had escaped his notice. From this bold and open profession of truth, as he perceives it, without regard to any man, he will suffer nothing to lead him astray, not even the politely expressed contempt of the so-called fashionable world, which can only conceive of the literary vocation by comparison with its own social circle, and would impose the etiquette of the Court upon the conduct of the Scholar.

I here close these Lectures. If a thought of mine has entered into any now present, and shall there abide as a guide to higher truth, perhaps it may sometimes awaken the memory of these lectures and of me,—and only in this way do I desire to live in your recollection.

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